

the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, and the results have been turned over by the federal government to the provincial authorities.

I do not intend at this time to catalogue fully all of Alberta's wealth of natural resources. I think I should mention, however, the province's vast forest resources, of which the greater proportion is as yet undeveloped. The principal tree species found in the province, in order of their present commercial importance, are spruce, lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, balsam fir, white birch and tamarack. The chief products of these forest resources are lumber, pulpwood, railway ties, mine props and fence posts. The annual production of lumber alone in the province is nearly 400 million board feet.

A great part of these Alberta forests is situated on the east slope of the Rocky mountains. This east slope is particularly important, because it forms the watershed of rivers that are vital to Canada as a whole and especially to the prairie provinces. The federal government has recognized this fact in the establishment of the Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board and the allotment of \$6 million of federal funds to aid conservation measures in the area.

Notwithstanding the other great resources and industries that I have mentioned, farming is still the most important industry in the province. In 1950 Alberta farmers produced over 30 million pounds of butter and over three million pounds of cheese. And in order to help sweeten and preserve this a bit, Alberta produces each year about 80 million pounds of sugar, as well as more than half a million pounds of salt. About one-quarter of all the grain grown in Canada comes from Alberta.

The farming industry is not in as prosperous a condition as I should like to see it. The floor prices under cheese, butter and eggs have helped the dairy industry to a certain extent, but these prices are fixed just barely at the cost of production. It has been extremely difficult to get competent help in this industry.

The producers of grain have had a very difficult year. It was a cold, backward spring. A considerable part of Alberta was too dry, and in August we had a severe frost that reduced both the quality and the quantity of the grain. To add to these troubles, Alberta had a wet fall, and a large portion of the grain which was threshed was low grade, tough or damp. We had an early snow, and a considerable portion of the grain north of Red Deer is still unthreshed.

I am pleased to note that the government recently announced an interim payment on

both wheat and coarse grains of the 1950 crop. I am glad to see that the government has recognized the plight of the farmer in this way.

I should like at this time to urge the government to close out the five-year pool at the earliest possible moment—

Hon. Mr. Haig: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: How much are they going to pay us?

Hon. Mr. Stambaugh:—and, in doing so, to have regard to what I feel is the just claim of the Western grain farmers. I refer to the manner in which these farmers subsidized the Canadian people to the extent of 30 cents per bushel on domestic consumption of wheat and wheat products during the period from March 1945 to February 1947.

Also at this time I wish to draw attention to the great contribution made by the federal government toward the opening up of the north country generally by building the Mackenzie highway. The fishing industry of the far north—to take only one example—benefits tremendously by the completion of this highway from Grimshaw to Hay River. Thousands of tons of fish are now trucked out over this road to markets in Canada and the United States.

The federal government is to be commended on the way it has gone forward with irrigation in southern Alberta. You would have to see this to appreciate it fully. Last July I travelled by car from Medicine Hat to Lethbridge, and just east of Taber I came to the irrigation district. Up until then the treeless land was dry and had hardly any crop, the grass was dry and brown and the weather was very hot. On entering the irrigation belt, however, it seemed to me like an entirely different world. The temperature dropped at least ten degrees. Trees and shrubs were in full foliage, and flowers were in bloom. Crops of peas and beans, corn and sugar-beets were in excellent condition.

One of the things that impressed me deeply, and a scene that I can still vividly recall, was a great field of flax in full bloom. This waving mass of purple was one of the most beautiful sights that I have ever seen. It is no wonder that the honourable senator from Medicine Hat (Hon. Mr. Gershaw) is so enthusiastic about irrigation.

I have enumerated some of the natural resources of Alberta, but the greatest natural resource of the province, as of Canada, is its people. Their energy, resourcefulness and courage are qualities that make me feel optimistic about the future of our country.

As far as the crucial international situation is concerned, I feel that we have excellent