

rather unusual one for this type of debate. It accentuates the positive rather than the negative. It does not particularly criticize the government for sins of commission, which might suggest there have been sins of omission with respect to government policy on resource matters. Because it is a positive statement it has seemed to me, as I have listened to the spokesmen on the government side, that it has caught them unaware.

I am happy to be associated with the amendment as its seconder because it does provide the government with an opportunity to state in positive terms its policies, its programs and its objectives in the important field of resource conservation and the equally important field of resource development. I am going to emphasize in my remarks that part of the amendment which reads as follows:

● (4:40 p.m.)

...this house is of the opinion that the government should state immediately its policy on national resources and clearly set out its intentions and objectives generally...

Up to the present moment, Mr. Speaker, we have had three spokesmen from the government side. The first spokesman, who is a recent addition to the government side, assumed a rather belligerent approach to the problem. I do not think he is quite acclimated following his transition from a member of the opposition to a member on the government side of the house. He even tried to draw me into the discussion before I had had an opportunity to make my contribution.

The attitude of the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) reminded me of the approach that used to be taken in the house by a former member who moved from the role of an opposition member to the role of a supporter of the government almost overnight. He has not seemingly had too much difficulty in making the transition. I refer, of course, to the former member from Assiniboia in the province of Saskatchewan who is now resting peacefully in the other place. At one time he used to take the same belligerent approach to all matters.

The second spokesman was the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Pepin). I rather thought that the minister went on the defensive in his response to the amendment. We provided him with an opportunity to state in very specific and precise terms just what he, as the over-all co-ordinating spokesman for the government, had in mind regarding the problem of resource conservation and

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development. He admitted that the government had been preoccupied with matters that were of lesser importance so far as the ultimate welfare of the people of Canada is concerned.

So that I will not be accused of misquoting the minister, let me draw the attention of the house to the minister's words in this regard, as reported at page 3396 of yesterday's *Hansard*:

I agree, then, that this discussion is useful, because it will provide, in my opinion, a welcome antidote to the obsession of some Canadians who visualize all our problems in Canada in the context of national unity.

As reported in the third paragraph on that page the minister went on:

You know as well as I do, Mr. Speaker, that the public, who has an understanding of those things, is quite aware that problems such as national unity, bilingualism and recognition of collective rights, are secondary as compared with the need for material security and the quest for individual happiness.

I could not agree more with the minister that this house has been too much preoccupied with these things of lesser importance, and in this regard I do not think that the government, which has the ultimate leadership of the house as its responsibility, is entirely free of guilt.

I think one of the reasons we are faced with the critical economic and financial problems that we have been discussing since parliament resumed is the government's neglect to deal in positive terms with the important subject of a national policy on resources, renewable, non-renewable and human. This is why—

Mr. Herridge: Would the hon. gentleman permit a question? The hon. gentleman is a former cabinet minister in a Progressive Conservative government. Why did he not start along that line when he was in office?

Mr. Dinsdale: I was coming to that, Mr. Speaker. I am very glad that the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) has provided me at this juncture in my speech with the opportunity to indicate to the house, in anticipation of what I had intended to say later, that I think resource development was the keynote of the policy of the former government compared with the present government. However, I shall deal with that in detail later in my remarks.

To get back to the point I was making, Mr. Speaker, I think our current economic