

*Natural Resources—Development*

All of us in this country have heard repeated many times the statement Sir Wilfrid Laurier made some 50 or 60 years ago that the 20th century would belong to Canada.

**An hon. Member:** And it does.

**Mr. Harkness:** I notice this statement gets great applause from the other side of the house, but I am just going to point out that, while there were many predictions that in this century our population and development would increase in a way comparable to the United States in the 19th century, so far those predictions and hopes have not been realized. It is true that population and development have been moving ahead at a somewhat more rapid rate during the past 15 years, but generally speaking we have not gone ahead in the way it was expected we would at the end of the last century.

The question then arises, Mr. Speaker, as to why the increase in population and development has not met the high hopes of our fathers and grandfathers at the turn of the century. This has not been the result of any lack of natural resources. We have them in the form of arable land, forests, minerals, fisheries and so on, to perhaps a greater extent than any other country. The reasons, therefore, must be looked for elsewhere. External factors, which the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Lesage) mentioned, have had some effect. The two wars and the great depression were external factors which did slow up our economy and stop the flow of immigrants into this country. There is no doubt that part of the answer lies there, although on the other hand the two wars did stimulate certain industries and cause a considerable amount of development.

However, I believe the main reason we have not gone ahead more rapidly than we have can be found in the general fiscal trade and development policies followed during the past 56 years of this century. I believe they have been wrong in conception and lacking in foresight and imagination. The responsibility for that lies largely with the Liberal party. They have been in power for 41 of these past 56 years, and on their past performance record as well as on the basis of their present attitude, little can be expected from them in the future in the way of development policies and concrete progress in this country. Canadians have greater opportunities for the future than perhaps any other people in the world, but to realize those opportunities we need a national development policy such as is advocated in the amendment we are now discussing.

The natural resources upon which a great amount can be built are here in abundance

but they will not, by themselves, bring development and prosperity. This requires their proper utilization. Natural resources may be divided into two groups or kinds. First there are the renewable resources which are arable lands, forests, fisheries and hydro-electric power; secondly the exhaustible or non-renewable resources, minerals and all kinds of metals, asbestos, etc. on the one hand, and energy producing minerals, coal, oil and gas on the other. Our development during the past 15 years has been chiefly in the direction of the exhaustible resources which we have been producing and, in many cases, shipping out of the country in a raw or semi-processed state.

If we are to realize the great future which is possible for us, we must pursue policies which will ensure a much greater proportion of our exhaustible resources being completely processed in Canada. We must put greater emphasis on the development and proper use of the renewable resources which we will never run out of if they are handled properly. In this connection I would just say, as an aside, that I am glad a committee on land use has been set up in the other place to study that very wide question.

It is an extremely important subject and one upon which a great deal of study could properly be put. I think, as a matter of fact, it may be the crux to the continued and increasing fertility of a very large part of the land in this country.

I wish now, Mr. Speaker, to discuss the national development policy with special reference to my own province of Alberta to indicate some of the developments which have taken place there, some which are projected, and to discuss some of the things which can be done to encourage further development. Most Canadians, and those people in other countries who know anything about Canada, associate Alberta chiefly with oil and gas. Since the war there has been an enormous expansion in that industry. The figures in connection with it have been given to this house and have appeared in innumerable newspapers and magazine articles, so I will not take the time of the house to repeat them. The situation may be summarized in this way. A vigorous exploration program has established sufficient reserves of gas to meet the foreseeable needs of the country, both as fuel and as an energy source, for at least 20 years. An exploration program has discovered oil reserves sufficient to meet Canada's needs for about the same length of time. The commercial development of the Athabaska tar sands now under way indicates that these tar sands will be the chief world reserve of oil in the years ahead when the present oil