

Sutherland) says that at this period of our history good roads have become a national undertaking. The same argument is used in favour of technical education. As a matter of fact, everything which tends to the progress of any province is to the national advantage. But there is the British North America Act, which determines the works which should be undertaken by this Government, and the works which are under provincial jurisdiction, and if there is a work which has been left entirely to the control of the provinces it is the highways. My hon. friend from Frontenac (Mr. Edwards) says that the system of taxation which has been granted to the provinces does not permit of a sufficient amount of money for the provinces to carry on their works, and that that is the reason why a special subsidy is given by the Federal Government. Well, Mr. Chairman, I submit that if the subsidy is not sufficient it ought to be increased in order that the provinces should be left with that control which has been given to them by our constitution. Let us increase the subsidy if we can afford to do so—because the question of my hon. friend from Red Deer (Mr. Clark) has not been answered: Where will you get the money from? But it would be preferable to give an additional grant of money to the provinces and leave them in full control of those provincial works which have been given to them by the British North America Act.

There is another question. Some of the provinces have adopted the policy of building good roads, and they have made sacrifices for that purpose. In the province from which I come we are proud of the roads which have been built during the last few years. The municipalities have borrowed large amounts of money from the provincial Government, and they are paying annually large sums for interest and to provide sinking fund to pay back the principal within forty years. The farmers in most instances have earned the money themselves, the arrangement has worked very well, and at the present time the main platform of the Gouin Government,— which has been returned to power to-night with what seems to be a big majority—is the continuation of that policy of good roads, absolutely independent of any money which this Government might give to the province.

Well, is it fair that people who have already paid money for the improvement of their own roads should be called upon to contribute to the taxation which will be

[Mr. E. Lapointe.]

necessary in order to raise money for the building of roads in other provinces? I ask this question in all sincerity. This Government, according to the resolution, is to have control over the quality and the standard of the roads which are to be built. Suppose that quality or standard does not coincide with the quality or standard which has been adopted by the province of Quebec and that that province refuses to change its plans, would it be fair that the people of the province of Quebec should be required to contribute money for the construction of works in other provinces which ought to be carried out by the people of those provinces? Why not leave to the provinces those rights, powers and responsibilities which have been given to them or imposed upon them by the British North America Act? Again I say that if the Government has money available for the purpose of assisting the provinces to carry on their own local works, let them give the money to the provinces by way of increased subsidies. I protest against the interference of the Government in local works; if they interfere with matters of education or of highways, they may do so in connection with other matters which are purely local and provincial.

Mr. McISAAC: It is quite plain that this is not an undertaking on the part of the Federal Government to build roads in the provinces; it is a contribution from the Federal Treasury to assist the Provincial Governments in the building and improvement of highways. Whatever amount may be spent, the treasury of each province will be obliged to furnish sixty per cent and the Federal Government will aid them to the extent of providing the remaining forty per cent of the cost. It has been hinted that the intention is to build a great trunk highway across the continent for automobile traffic, and so on. Well, if that were true—but it is not—certainly my province could not participate, because there would be a missing link in the highway owing to the fact that there is quite a stretch of water between Prince Edward Island and the mainland of Canada. So that, so far as my province is concerned, such a proposal would have no advantageous effect.

An hon. MEMBER: How about a tunnel?

Mr. McISAAC: Well, a tunnel is not a highway.

Mr. BUREAU: You have a ferry.