

*Supply—Industry*

federal-provincial conference on conservation with a view to the establishment of a national policy on soil, forest and water conservation and land use for Canada.

• (5:10 p.m.)

This is the policy which our party has put forward repeatedly. During the debates on my resolution throughout the years. I have received the unanimous approval of all members who spoke. In spite of this fact, nothing was done largely because at that time Duplessis was the premier of Quebec and they were afraid of treading on his toes. I understand he thought this proposal would be an invasion of provincial rights. As a matter of fact, on one occasion the former prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent, spoke in favour of the principle of the resolution. However, fortunately Hon. Jean Lesage was later elected premier of Quebec. He had been a cabinet minister in the federal government and he knew the federal approach to this question. He had listened to the debates in this house, had taken part in them himself, and there was a change of climate on that account. He was quite willing to listen to the views expressed by cabinet ministers and members of this house as well as others.

As a result of the change of attitude in Quebec at the time of the election of Premier Lesage, the Progressive Conservative party of the day made arrangements to call the "Resources for Tomorrow" conference in Montreal which took place on October 23-28 of 1961. In this connection, I give full credit to the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, who has always been very interested in this question. This conference was called and it was, shall I say, the commencement of this federal-provincial approach to these important questions.

From this conference, Mr. Chairman, sprang the Canadian Council of Resource Ministers, which dealt with the question of dominion-provincial conferences for this purpose. As a result of the "Resources for Tomorrow" conference in 1961, I placed another resolution on the order paper on January 17, 1962, having read the publications issued by that conference. That resolution was in these terms:

That in the opinion of this house the government should consider the advisability of the creation of a water pollution control division, composed of representatives of the ten provinces, within the framework of the proposed National Resources Council, with powers and funds required to institute research programs, collect, collate and analyse water control data, and to co-ordinate the water pollution control objectives for the provinces; in addition, to further the study of water pollution control problems of a national character.

[Mr. Herridge.]

I might say, Mr. Chairman, that whenever the motion has come before the house for consideration since that time, it has received general support from hon. members representing all parties in this house. So, I think it is true to say that we are united in the realization that we must have federal and provincial co-operation to effectively meet the problems that we face.

This year, Mr. Chairman, I was fortunate in being able to attend the conference on "Pollution and our Environment" as a parliamentary observer. I was most interested in the general meetings of the conference and the discussions which took place, as well as in the various panels which were arranged and which dealt with various aspects of pollution, whether of air, soil or water. I went from one to the other and did the best I could to pick up, shall I say, the general tenor of the information given, the general tenor of the debates, and so on, and found them most informative and interesting.

Then, after three days at the conference the panels reported to another general conference meeting. As a result of that meeting, guideline groups were organized to deal with various aspects of this question. For instance, one group discussed scientific and technological problems. Another group discussed legal, jurisdictional, legislative and enforcement problems; another economic and financial considerations; another administration both public and private; another education and research; another dealt with planning, and finally one which dealt with getting the information with respect to this problem to the public and to the organizations concerned.

As a result of these meetings, another general meeting was held and the common guidelines which emerged were as follows. The first one was the need for a federal organization or agency which could develop a pollution abatement code, co-ordinate and disseminate available information, conduct research and co-operate with other agencies working in this field. In effect, this is along the lines of the principle contained in the resolution which I have moved in this house since 1952.

The second guideline concerned itself with the preparation of some form of national standards. Many delegates did not like the word "standards", partly because these would be difficult to define on a nation-wide basis and partly because they would be interpreted as a minimum in some cases. Therefore, they preferred to use the expression "national objectives" in relation to pollution.