

give the committee some idea of the apportionment of cost as between the federal government and other authorities? Is the federal government planning to bear the bulk of the cost of this program, as has been done in connection with P.F.R.A., or is there to be a 20 per cent provision or something of that nature along the lines of crop insurance? Proportionately speaking, how much of the cost of this whole scheme is the federal government prepared to bear?

Mr. Hamilton (Ou'Appelle): Mr. Chairman, in my discussions with the agriculture ministers from the various provinces this point was raised. I think the best way I can answer the question is to say that as ministers of agriculture we recognize that not only will there be different types of agreements with the various provinces in view of their different problems, but there will also be several types of agreements within each province to meet certain conditions. We also recognize as ministers that under each of these various types of agreements, varying proportions will be paid by the governments. We also recognize that some parts of this legislation will not cost either of the two senior governments a great deal except for advice and the energy to carry that advice to the local group.

The answer I will give is that with respect to some types of agreements I would suggest that the sharing will be on a 50-50 basis, whereas in other types of agreements it may be that the federal government will pay the larger share or contribute the whole cost and work out some self-liquidating device to meet that advance. In other types of agreements it may be that the provinces will bear the total cost or a great deal of the cost because the matter comes within their responsibility. In that event we will co-operate in any way that will help their activities.

In discussing the matter with me the provincial ministers expressed, as I say, great sympathy with the principles involved. Two ministers did raise the question that when it came down to agreements with their provinces they would want to see what the price tag was going to be. I think I have said enough to indicate that with regards to certain types of projects, having in mind the physical ones now, there will be a sharing based on the precedents of the past. With regard to other types involving new agreements, I certainly will have no way of knowing what the basis of sharing will be until we sit down and work out what we want to do and how best to achieve it.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Chairman, this is my first opportunity to congratulate

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the minister on his transfer from the department over which he presided before he came to the Department of Agriculture. I assure him that he will have all the co-operation he will merit. He may be sure that the proposals he makes to the house will be carefully scrutinized, as in the national interest they must be. But subject to these contingencies we extend to the minister our very warmest wishes with respect to the assignment that has been given him in the assumption of these new and heavy responsibilities.

There can, of course, be no criticism of the object of the resolution. However, while the resolution is far-reaching it is couched in very high sounding and vague language. It certainly is not specific, as the reply to the question asked a few moments ago indicated. If we had received from the minister a more detailed explanation of what the resolution seeks to do it would not warrant the criticism which I have thus far made of it. Certainly the minister sought to establish the idea that the philosophy behind this resolution is either one which he himself has conceived or which the government has established. Little reference was made to the work of the committee in the other place. No attention whatsoever was paid to the fact that the very important work launched by the committee of the other place was undertaken as the result of action by the government of Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent and in particular by that right hon. gentleman.

In the statement he has made the Minister of Agriculture also ignores the fact that there are other agencies, both provincial and federal, that have worked on this problem for some time. He has mentioned in passing the work under the P.F.R.A., an organization which has done a wonderful job, and undoubtedly if its scope were extended to take in the whole of the country it could accomplish many of the important activities outlined in the general words of the resolution.

The minister referred to the committee of the other place known as the conservation and land use committee, which made an extremely important and valuable start in compiling information as to actual conditions obtaining in the provinces with a view to recommendations on specific projects that might be undertaken. The minister has mentioned, of course, and quite properly and necessarily so, the co-operation with the provinces that is indispensable in a matter of this sort. However, that co-operation might easily be used by either level of government as an excuse for no action at all. We know of other instances in the history of this government, when projects have depended