

Supply—Northern Affairs

These resources will certainly be neither inconsiderately diminished nor dilapidated if federal aid is acquired by the province.

Over the years, the Quebec government has refused to co-operate with the central authority, on grounds of provincial autonomy, when it suited its purpose, but in other fields saw no disadvantage or danger in doing so.

The people of the province of Quebec are well aware that, for many years, they have lost millions of dollars because of this refusal to co-operate. We hope this deficiency will now cease and that relations between the governments of the same colour, or almost the same colour, on both levels, will help Quebec obtain the amounts of money earmarked for that province as well as for the others.

(Text):

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I am going to be very brief but I rise on this item as the appropriate one on which to utter a few sentences.

I would like first of all to express my appreciation for the interest and industry of the minister, and his serious concern with respect to the development of a policy for our natural resources. I have had the opportunity to have one or two chats with the minister, and have been very pleased after conversations with him to understand his general approach to the whole situation. In addition, I would like to express my usual appreciation of the good work done by the staff of his department with all its ramifications from water resources to Eskimos and caribou.

For some 13 years I have been one of those members of this house who have been urging the standing committee on mines, forests and waters to sit and have an opportunity to examine the estimates of this department and those of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys. I think we must give credit to the minister in that he has seen to it that this committee has sat during the current session and has had the opportunity to hear evidence and to hear a statement from the minister. This is the only part of the minutes which I have had the opportunity to read, but I am very pleased to note in that statement the government's philosophy and its thinking in general with respect to the development of our natural resources.

I am always delighted when I find governments accepting piecemeal and from time to time policies advocated from this corner of

[Mr. Roberge.]

the house. We are always ready to give credit where it is due, and in this respect I am very pleased about two things in particular. First, I should like to quote from the minutes of the committee at page 19, where the minister, as part of his statement, said:

The tenth point is that of conservation. There will be a conservation conference called to plan the most efficient and effective use of the resources of this country at national, provincial, municipal private and research levels, because there is no use, gentlemen, in building roads and finding out the area of energy resources and finding out the area of mineral resources and in putting them together in juxtaposition, planning for the processing here in Canada—there is no use in doing all this work if there is not some thought given to a long range conservation concept of the most efficient use of those resources.

We in this group support that statement by the minister without any qualification, and if this government gives effect to that concept we shall be very pleased indeed.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, for a good many years I have had resolutions on the order paper expressing the point of view of this group with respect to the need for a dominion-provincial conference to establish national principles and policies with respect to the development of our renewable natural resources, and I am very glad indeed, as are the rest of the members of this group, that the minister has made this statement. We know it is not a very definitive statement so far, and we will have to see what the future brings forth, since our fingers have been burned on previous occasions when we have been a little too optimistic.

I have been in the habit of taking people at their word, but then I have lived among lumberjacks and they are very simple and straightforward people, but the statement sounds very well and I trust that without undue delay it would be put into effect. We are very pleased to observe this attitude toward this question because there is no doubt we have got to have an acceptance of national principles and policies with respect to the development of natural resources, and then co-operation between the various levels of government and private industry to put these policies into effect for the advantage of Canada as a whole.

My second point is that I was particularly pleased to see the mention made by the minister in his report with respect to his roads to resources program. I think there was some imagination used, not only in the terminology but in the policy itself. Although the funds which have been allocated for this purpose to date have not been very large, I hope they may become what one could call the embryo of something which will develop into a very substantial policy, because I think