

*Natural Resources—Development*

in perpetuity, that their development should be economic and that the best means to ensure that it will be economic is, in general, private enterprise. These fundamentals create a basic consistency in resource management and the principles of resource management.

But to try to impose an over-all blueprint, a national policy, as some understand it, for resource management, to do that is to depart from the facts of our national situation. In a country as vast as Canada, with widely different conditions and with different problems in different areas, there cannot be a single and unified policy for the management of resources. The fact that the British North America Act places resources under the control of the provinces is not a matter of accident or coincidence. It is rather a reflection by the fathers of confederation of the basic facts of our national existence.

Resource problems are generally regional problems or local problems and must be handled on a regional or local basis. Thus it is that the facts dictate and our constitution requires that our resource management be in the hands of the provinces. This is the framework and the background in which we must see the problems of resource management and development in Canada.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** That was made clear over and over again.

**Mr. Lesage:** Accordingly, to advocate a national policy on a national basis, as has been done by the Leader of the Opposition, as a responsibility of this parliament or this government is to misread the facts of our economy and the spirit and letter of our constitution.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, I simply rise on a question of privilege to say this. The minister's entire speech, in so far as the question of constitutional power is concerned, has no reference whatever to the remarks I made and is simply a straw man. Everyone of us believes in the constitution.

**Mr. Lesage:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot let that statement go without quoting again what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) had to say yesterday:

We do not want a day-to-day course wherein there are great developments in Canada depending on the world situation, but a plan; not a planned economy but a national policy; . . .

That is clear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** And over and over again I mentioned a national policy in co-operation with the provinces requesting assistance.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before the hon. member for Calgary North proceeds with his remarks may I just rise for one second to ask the

*Hansard* reporter not to take some of these interjections which are not meant for the record.

**Mr. D. S. Harkness (Calgary North):** Mr. Speaker, before proceeding with the remarks which I intend to make in connection with this resolution, I should like to make some comments on the inaccurate and misleading statements which have just been made by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Lesage). The minister started out in his speech by saying that the depression of the Conservative period of the thirties held up development in the north and so on. There is no doubt that development in the north was held up by the depression but I should like to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservative government which held office from 1930 to 1935 inherited the depression from a previous Liberal government. That depression started in 1929 and had been under way for a year when a Conservative government took over and tried to clear up the debris which had accumulated by that time. Any responsibility for holding up development in this country owing to the depression is due to the fact that it was a Liberal government and its policy which brought that depression on in this country or at least accentuated it in this country. It was a world-wide depression but the policy followed by the Liberal party certainly accentuated it as far as Canada was concerned.

The minister made a great point of the fact that the estimates for northern affairs had increased five times in five years. I must say that that situation has only been brought about owing to urgings extending back over many years by members of this party to do more as far as the development of the north and of our resources generally is concerned. When I first came to this house twelve years ago I remember that John R. MacNicol was talking day in and day out about the development of the north and the development of our resources generally across this country. That sort of pressure has been exerted from this side of the house in all that time and I know that it was being exerted many years prior to that time. It has only been after a good deal of urging and after a great deal of pressure being put on the government that they have finally begun to do something as far as the development of our north is concerned.

I might point out that only the year before last, when the estimates of this department were before the estimates committee, members of the opposition made strong pleas for the building of roads and for a survey to be made in connection with the building of a railway in order to open up the northern