

Supply—Northern Affairs

revenue out of his forests because there was not enough money coming back from the federal government.

Well, that is fine; he recognized the problem and went out to get some more money. What did the head of the largest pulp and paper concern in this particular part of the country say? He was enraged by this and said, "We are going to have to cut down our research program. If the federal government and the provincial government refuse to get together and work out equitable taxation with us, why should we continue to make efforts to plan for the conservation of our forests and plow back money, if the fiscal policy is so bad?"

The evidence given by the head of the Canadian institute of foresters and by Major General Kennedy, who is one of Canada's most prominent foresters, was that the government needs to look closely at its whole fiscal policy in relation to the industry. The figures I read indicate that forestry is getting very little put back into it, either from the federal government or from the provincial governments, in relation to the taxation revenue. This being the case I think the industry is in a position to say to the federal and provincial governments, why are you not showing stronger leadership in research?

The final point I wish to make is this. I hope the minister does not go off down the path that so many ministers in the past have taken with regard to forestry, and become obsessed with firefighting or getting rid of the bugs we have in profusion in many of the forests. I suggest that fire protection and forest entomology are no longer the most important problems which concern the forest industries. Action must focus upon silviculture, and upon getting the crop back again.

I am not suggesting that the minister should abandon or even refrain from extending his fire protection program in co-operation with the provinces, but I should like to suggest that he work out some scheme of subsidizing experiments in controlled burning, because almost every good pulpwood forest we have in this country was formed as a result of forest fires. In other words I suggest we should, after proper preparation, set forest fires deliberately in order to make regeneration possible. This would require considerable expenditure on control measures, but it is a field where more research should be done.

I should like to conclude by saying to the minister that you have a real problem here and a wonderful opportunity for leadership. Don't go chasing off after northern affairs completely; don't go chasing the obsession of putting out forest fires and getting rid of the bugs. Go right after the whole problem

of silviculture, forest management and regeneration. I think the minister would then merit much greater thanks from the Canadian people than any of the previous ministers we have had in the department of northern affairs.

Mr. Pearson: I welcome the opportunity of making some observations about the work of this very important department of government, though I may say that these observations will not include that particular branch of the department which has just been touched upon by the hon. member for Port Arthur. I say this not because I do not recognize the importance of that branch, but because there is no time to deal with all the various activities of the department which are involved in these estimates.

The hon. member who has just spoken said some laudatory things about the minister, and contrasted his activities and energy with those of his predecessor. I am not going to say anything which would deprecate the energy and drive—

Mr. Fisher: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, this is the second time within a week that the Leader of the Opposition has attributed things to me which I did not say. The first was in connection with Rhodes scholars. I was just making this point in connection with the change of leadership, that I think it is good to have new leadership—completely new thoughts. It was not a great reflection on the performance of the previous minister.

Mr. Pearson: I will be glad to accept that correction. As far as the Rhodes scholarships are concerned, I do not think I did the hon. member an injustice in the remarks I made on a former occasion.

What the hon. member has now said is that it is a good thing to have a change of leadership. Perhaps I should point out that though there has been a change of leadership, energetic and determined leadership has been given to the work of this department over a good many years, since the second world war. It was in 1950, under the previous administration, that this separate department was set up.

It was then, I believe, the department of resources and development, and it was under the present minister's predecessor in the Liberal administration, Mr. Lesage, that the name of this department was changed to the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. While a change in name may not in itself be of too much practical importance, and may have only symbolic significance, since that time, under Mr. Lesage, a great deal of energy and leadership has been given,