

*Supply—Forestry*

I want to emphasize this fact, and I have kept in fairly close touch with what has been going on with respect to the council, that the working of the council and the spirit and purpose of the council has set an example for other departments of federal and provincial governments to follow. It has been mutually advantageous. They are doing constructive work and approaching the common problem in the right spirit and with the correct purpose. I must say that in the formation of this council we have laid the requisite foundation upon which to build a sound forest conservation and development policy for the provinces and for Canada as a whole, based on the principle of co-operative federalism, and it should be given effect to because they have recognized the problems. They have agreed on the principles on which the council will work and on the need for action in this direction. In my opinion government forest policy must be directed toward the greatest benefits for the largest number of people. The federal government is responsible, together with the other governments, for the development of forest policy with respect to both the publicly owned and the privately owned sectors of the economy. Although the greater part of Canadian forest land is public property, all governments have responsibilities and authority related to public and private ownership. For instance, their responsibilities for providing benefits for the people as a whole may justify regulation of the practices of the private owners where their policies conflict with the public interests; on the other hand, the government's authority with respect to taxation, land use and education policies should be exercised to aid and stimulate the practices of private owners where those practices contribute to the general welfare. In the development of this forest policy we have, as a result of the exercise of the principle of co-operative federalism, an opportunity from the viewpoint of members of this group to demonstrate what can be done in building a sound democratic society on the basis of what we call a mixed economy, the public and the private sectors both working to the general advantage.

I think the report the minister has made to the committee clearly indicates the scope and value of the department. For years we urged the establishment of a Department of Forestry. There were a good many who thought it was satisfactory to have this organization remain merely a branch within another department. But anyone who reads the annual report of the department, anyone who has read the publications of the forests products branch, will realize that this department is most necessary at this time. If I may introduce a personal note, may I say

that the present director of the forests products laboratory in Vancouver is well known to me. I knew him as a boy. He used to travel several miles to come to my little log cabin in the woods at week ends when he was let out of school because he thought I made the best hotcakes in the district. I am very pleased that this young man who grew up around the Arrow lakes should now be director of a forest products laboratory. I am referring to Dr. Joseph Gardner.

I wish, now, to make a few suggestions to the minister with respect to federal forestry policy. I think there is need for a continuing review of forestry policy. During the past 15 years, to the best of my knowledge, the forest industry in Canada has been studied by at least seven royal commissions in the provinces. In addition, studies have been made by private industry and by other organizations. There is a growing public interest in sound forest management policy. There is no question about that. In view of the fact that forest policy to date has been the result of a large number of inter-related policies—it has grown up over the years on the basis of piecemeal legislation—it is desirable, in my view, that the present policies be reviewed in order that all sections may be correlated to meet the current political and economic developments. It is now time for government to take a searching look at our legislative policies and practices to devise a co-ordinated policy that will meet present needs and trends. I think this would be most appropriate in view of the excellent co-operation the federal government is getting in connection with this question from the ministers council of the provinces.

My second suggestion concerns the need for the development of public understanding and appreciation of the role the forest industry plays in the development of our economy, the maintenance of our water resources, wild life population and the provision of recreational facilities. This is, of course, in addition to the major economic role which forestry plays in Canada. In making this suggestion I am not reflecting on the present information and public relations branch of the department one iota. I give them full credit for what they have done. However, while there has been an excellent service, a greatly improved service throughout the years, especially to those interested in forest management and operation, I still think there is a need for an extension of the public relations work so as to reach the public as a whole. I think there should be a much wider appreciation of the value of the industry to Canada, and I am suggesting that the information and public relations branch should