

Supply—Northern Affairs

was that suspicion which led me to question him; it was no reflection on him at all.

Item agreed to.

Forestry branch—

Forestry operations division—

767. Contributions to the provinces for assistance in forest inventory, reforestation and forest fire protection in accordance with agreements that have been or may be entered into by Canada and the provinces—further amount required, \$190,000.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I am very interested in this vote, the contributions to the provinces for assistance in forest inventory, reforestation and forest fire protection in accordance with agreements that have been or may be entered into by Canada and the provinces. Here is another further amount of \$190,000 required, \$150,000 with respect to forest inventory, and \$40,000 with respect to reforestation. We support this increase wholeheartedly, and we support the policy wholeheartedly. But in view of the fact that there are agreements made with the provinces with respect to expenditures on forest inventory and reforestation, could the minister inform the house if this extra money is required because there have been more agreements signed, or is it because various provinces have undertaken more work in this connection this year?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It is the latter, Mr. Chairman. The provinces have gone ahead with projects approved under the terms of the federal-provincial forestry agreements involving increased expenditure for the provinces.

Mr. Herridge: One other question. I am very interested in this question because I have seen some of the inventories being taken. What does the federal department do to make certain that the inventories in question have been undertaken in the way designated by the agreement?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Of course, Mr. Chairman, it is the responsibility of the federal government, the department concerned, to satisfy itself that the expenditures made by the provinces for which reimbursement is claimed from the federal government have been properly made in accordance with the provisions of the agreements.

Mr. Herridge: In that connection, does the federal government have an official or an inspector make a check on the area concerned with respect to the inventory? In what way does the department receive an assurance that the area with which the inventory is concerned has been completely covered, and that the inventory has been scientifically secured?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, there are, I am informed, no federal inspectors on the ground. This is done by aerial survey, and the aerial surveys are closely checked by federal officers.

Mr. Herridge: This may be partly done by aerial surveys, but I have been with parties who have been conducting ground surveys of the timber stands, so this work must be done partly by air and partly by ground survey teams. I have been with parties conducting these checks.

Mr. Deschatelets: Mr. Chairman, I should like to know whether in respect to this item there was any agreement entered upon with the province of Quebec concerning a forest inventory and forest fire protection.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): The province of Quebec is not a party to the agreement in respect of the forest inventory and reforestation and it is these two matters which are covered by the further amount required.

Mr. Deschatelets: Does that mean that the province of Quebec is the only province which does not benefit from these grants?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): The province of Newfoundland is not a party to either of these programs. The province of New Brunswick is a party to one, namely forest inventory, and the province of Prince Edward Island to one, namely reforestation. Alberta is a party to one, namely the inventory. The other five provinces are parties to both agreements.

Mr. Deschatelets: Would the minister inform the house if at any time since this government came to power there has been any communication with the authorities of the province of Quebec in respect to these grants either by letter, telephone or telegram?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): There is an agreement with the province of Quebec in respect to forest fire protection, but the agreement does not extend to the two categories here mentioned, namely forest inventory and reforestation. One cannot say that in any discussions between officials this matter may not have come up, but we are not aware of any official communication on behalf of the government of the province in relation to the two matters now under discussion.

Mr. Deschatelets: Will you permit me a few comments at this point, Mr. Chairman? We are dealing here with one aspect of the fiscal relations between Ottawa and Quebec, and the reason we are pressing for an agreement to be reached concerning all these grants, including those covered by this item 767, is because, first of all, these grants are badly needed and, secondly, because the Minister of Finance himself, as well as the