

Natural Resources—Development

of the possibility of setting up an energy board. There exists at the present time an energy committee. Two years ago an inter-departmental committee was established to collect and consolidate all information in the federal government service pertaining to energy. The committee was set up to study the whole energy problem in Canada, and after a couple of meetings it was decided, as a first step, to put the statistical information in order.

A subcommittee was appointed to meet with the dominion statistician and make arrangements whereby there would be a gradual change in reporting on all forms of energy by the dominion bureau of statistics. This was done so that all these statistics could be coordinated and correlated at a focal point, so that anyone who wanted information on energy in Canada could find it in one place and in a form that could be converted and related to a common denominator. For purpose of comparison, coal is used as the common denominator.

The committee is under the chairmanship of Mr. W. Uren, of the dominion coal board. The work of the committee has progressed to the point where it is expected that soon the statistics will be in such a form that they will be extremely useful to provincial governments, industry or anyone who is interested.

The committee proposes to keep this information as up-to-date and useful as possible. The work that is being done appears to be in line with the resolutions adopted by the provincial mines ministers' conference last fall.

The departments who have representatives on the committee are Mines and Technical Surveys, Northern Affairs and National Resources, Trade and Commerce, Finance, National Defence and the national research council and the dominion coal board.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn, if I may, to the amendment that was presented by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. I quote from this amendment:

That this house is of the opinion that the welfare of the Canadian people requires the adoption now of a national development policy which will develop our natural resources . . .

The Leader of the Opposition also had this to say, and I quote from page 1155 of *Hansard*:

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.

So the Leader of the Opposition wishes to have a national plan—an over-all master plan for the development and management of resources in Canada. Mr. Speaker, I do not

believe it is up to the federal government to initiate, produce and administer such a national policy according to such a master plan.

Mr. Diefenbaker: In co-operation with the provinces.

Mr. Lesage: That is not in the amendment. I am sorry.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is all right.

Mr. Lesage: That is not in the amendment, and what the Leader of the Opposition proposed yesterday was a master plan—a national policy. Any such assumption ignores one vital question. Should we take the initiative in the exploitation of resources in the provinces? I say that such an assumption ignores the essential federal character of this country, and it is surprising that such a suggestion should have come from the source it did. If it had come from the C.C.F. party I could have understood it, but here is a party which has always claimed that it was the great defender of provincial rights; and there is nothing that could violate the autonomy of the provinces more than to try to impose or superimpose a national policy with regard to the development and management of natural resources which are the property of the provinces. The use of the term "resource management" helps us to understand who should develop the resources, who should manage them, who should deal with them. Who manages any estate or property? Basically and essentially it must be the person or party who owns the estate or property and in the field of resources in Canada that person or party is normally the province. Under the British North America Act each province has ownership and full control of its lands, forests, mineral resources and water resources. There are a few aspects where the federal government has something to do with resources.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That was made perfectly clear on several occasions during my speech, and all the minister is doing is producing a straw man.

Mr. Lesage: It might have been made clear but it is certainly not clear how this parliament or this government can establish a national policy, a master plan, in the domain of resources without infringing on provincial rights. That I cannot understand.

Mr. Studer: They cannot either.

Mr. Lesage: In Ontario it is the province of Ontario that owns the mineral resources and it is the province of Ontario that lays down—