

by the end of a certain period you will have covered a certain area, put in your measuring devices, got a program going there, and can then turn your attention to starting that sort of thing in another area.

Mr. PATTERSON: We have a program and, as has been indicated, it is entirely flexible. We may be influenced, and are influenced, a great deal by the moneys which we eventually have voted in the House to carry out our program. We plan a program and develop estimates for that program and they go through several stages as the members of the Committee are aware, and they eventually get passage in the House. They may be very greatly reduced from the original planning, and if they are, we adjust our program. A few years ago the policy of the government was to curtail entirely any increase in expenditures. In the hiring of new additional staff, we adjust our program to fit that type of thing, and at the same time new areas of requirement are coming in from the provinces, and urgent requirements. The development of this Saskatchewan-Nelson study has been under negotiation for several years, it has eventually come to a head where we can proceed with the implementation of that study.

Mr. FULTON: With respect to such program as there may be, is it the responsibility of your board or branch to initiate it and make recommendations for a program? Would that come under your responsibility?

Mr. PATTERSON: This is with respect to our general work, or to such a study as the Saskatchewan—

Mr. FULTON: No; in so far as there is or should be a program of the type we have been discussing, is it under your area of responsibility to recommend such a program of progressive studies.

Mr. PATTERSON: We discuss this type of thing with the provinces. We have agreements for sharing the costs of the hydrometric work with the provinces, and the federal government only moves forward and actually installs gauges and initiates metering stations in areas and with respect to which there is a definite federal responsibility. In other areas where we are dealing with the provincial resource we discuss with the province, and usually the province comes forward and indicates they would like improved coverage on some river or stream. Then we endeavour to fit in their requirement with what would—

Mr. FULTON: In the council of resource ministers—they are going to have a conference this Fall on pollution. They are, I believe—interested in this type of program? Could we anticipate, for instance, that they might come up with a recommended program of studies of the water resources of Canada, or would the initiative in that field come from your branch?

Mr. PATTERSON: I think it might come either way, sir. The council of resource ministers and the secretariat of the council have been gathering data on the administration of the water resources across the country. There is in the talking stage a proposal for a conference or a symposium to deal with the water resources management program and a national water policy.

Mr. FULTON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to come back to this but I do not want to monopolize the discussion.

Mr. DAVIS: Could I just ask one or two other questions which are—