

*Natural Resources—Development*

winter and in order to grow coarse grain. All these things are recommended against in the report. I would hope that the policies that would be followed as far as agriculture is concerned would be opposite to the recommendations contained in the Gordon commission report.

The Red Deer river irrigation project which could be launched in Alberta would make possible the development of a large and profitable livestock industry on what is now some of the driest land in the province. A project of this nature certainly should be realized. What we should be laying definite plans for and proceeding with to some extent is the opening up of new areas by railways and highways.

Turning to another matter for a moment I might point out that Alberta has a vast forest area, a large percentage of which is composed of straight pulpwood; in other words, the trees are not very large although there is also a great deal of saw lumber. In spite of the size of the forest areas of Alberta, many of them located close to railways and with highways running through them, no pulp and paper mills have been established in Alberta so far. One is being built at the present time and another is projected. This long delay in establishing pulp and paper plans in our province in spite of the wood that is there and the way in which the business has flourished in the last 15 or 20 years has been entirely due, I think, to the high and discriminatory freight rates under which we suffer in that province. We are at the very apex of the freight rate structure and as long as the structure remains as it is we in Alberta are going to have great difficulty in establishing industries. The pulp and paper industry is an outstanding example because there has been a great demand for pulp and paper. It has been one of the most profitable industries in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and the maritime provinces. In spite of the supply of wood that is available in Alberta it is only at this time with the price as it is today that there has been any attempt to develop a pulp and paper industry in Alberta. This points up the fact that we are discriminated against by the freight rate structure.

While I am dealing with the subject of forests I might say that the eastern Rockies forest conservation scheme is a good example of what can be done by federal and provincial co-operation in matters of this kind. That scheme which was carried on for some five years through co-operation between the two governments and which has now been turned over to the provincial government for administration will mean that a large area on

the eastern slope of the Rocky mountains will eventually be reforested and in the meantime the forests that are left there will be protected from loss through fire. This will have extremely far-reaching effects not only so far as the supply of pulpwood and timber is concerned—that will be one of the minor effects—but also with relation to the spring run-off. Perhaps the greatest effect will be to prevent the spring run-off from being as rapid as it has been and will assist in preventing many of our streams drying up, so they will be available for irrigation, stock-watering purposes and so on.

I believe that a national development policy should certainly have included in it many provisions for reforestation schemes, forest conservation schemes and measures of that kind to be executed as co-operative ventures between the federal and provincial governments as was the case with the eastern Rockies forest conservation scheme.

Another matter of importance is the vast coal resources of Alberta. The great bulk of Canadian coal lies in the province of Alberta. I have forgotten the exact figure but I believe between 11 per cent and 13 per cent of the world's known coal reserves are located in the province of Alberta. You might say that the province is virtually underlain by coal. Despite the extremely large reserves of coal in Alberta the industry in that province has dwindled continually. A number of the towns that were growing and thriving have now become ghost towns in which no one lives except a watchman. This has been due, of course, to the dieselization of the railways, to the increasing use of gas and the increasing use of oil for heating. Apparently, however, there is no policy on the part of this government to make any use of the great reserves of coal. There seems to be no plan calling for anything of an important nature being done in the way of research so that the vast coal deposits might be used as the basis of chemical industries. Coal is the basis of chemical industries. That coal might be used as a source of electric power or a source of gas when the supply of natural gas runs out. These are all avenues which should be under active exploration, but I feel very little is being done about them.

Another matter is this: the coal people in Crownsnest pass have themselves been trying to save their own industry and save their population, and continue to provide employment for their workers there by using that coal to develop an iron smelting industry. There are iron ore deposits in that area and, of course, there is plenty of limestone—all three of the chief essentials for an iron industry. They have carried on quite extensive geological surveys and made engineering