

Supply—Northern Affairs

The resources of the provinces belong to the provinces. They are constitutionally theirs by right and they should be theirs. In view of the responsibility of the provinces we would think it in very bad taste to suggest, and to embarrass any provinces by suggesting, certain roads. We leave it to them to recommend certain roads to us. If hon. members read my remarks to the standing committee they will see I said something along this line, that we do have the opportunity, when they propose a program to us, to point out what our philosophy is on the opening up of new resource areas. Sometimes, in the light of that discussion, the provincial governments do adjust their thinking to some degree. I do not believe there are any instances where we have forced our opinion on any provincial government. It has been done in the form of discussion, and if the proposal does not meet our criteria, then the matter is dropped. I would say in all honesty we have tried to get the provinces to see our side of the question, how we are trying to open up resource areas.

Mr. Hardie: On what is the philosophy based?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): The philosophy of roads to resources in the provinces is based primarily on the thought that if we are to build a grid system of roads in the territories there is no use to build that grid system of roads unless they are connected to settled areas in the provinces to the south. That is the No. 1 point. But there are several provinces which have no Northwest Territories to the north and in effect we are offering the same type of arrangement to those provinces, namely Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, with the exception of two of those provinces which did have areas which would bear up from the point of view of exploration, new exploration for mines and minerals first, but also looking at the possibilities of the forest industry, forest protection, recreation, etc., so there is an overall concept.

During the process of the provinces studying our proposal it became clear to two of the provinces, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, owing to their situation, that they could not find roads to virgin resource areas. Therefore, on behalf of the government the Prime Minister made a statement of policy in Halifax to the effect that if any provinces could not provide suggestions of natural resources roads we would accept in their cases further tourist roads.

Tourist roads have added a great deal of difficulty to the working out of this program.

[Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle).]

We could not touch the regular highway systems because then we would be interfering with provincial highway responsibility. But, I think at this time, and speaking only in general terms, I can announce to the committee that tentative agreement has now been reached on roads across the country totalling \$110 million over the five-year period. Several provinces have taken the maximum. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have taken the maximum. Even though Newfoundland's first proposal totalled only \$7.5 million to \$8 million, I understand that they want to put forward proposals later that will total the full amount of \$15 million. Therefore, I think when we are finished with this the estimate that I made to the committee that over the 5-year program there would be \$135 million going into this roads to resources program in the provinces—and I used a very round figure as far as the Northwest Territories and the Yukon were concerned—

Mr. McWilliam: Will the minister give the figure for New Brunswick?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): I left out New Brunswick because they have not asked for the maximum; they have asked for a total of \$12 million.

Mr. Godin: Can the minister give the figure for Ontario?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): So far, the figure has not been mentioned because there has been no agreement yet on any of the roads in Ontario. I announce these things only when tentative approval has just been about reached and I have only given totals in which it is formally agreed upon.

Mr. Hardie: There is one philosophy for western Canada and another philosophy for eastern Canada pretty well.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): You can look at it in that way but in practice, no. You heard the hon. members from those northern constituencies of Ontario and British Columbia speak today and they talked in terms of opening up resource areas in northern Ontario. That argument is just as effective and just as sound to fit into this philosophy as any argument I have presented.

I should like to keep moving on because I think hon. members who made suggestions and criticisms should have a word from me. One or two will be missed because their words were a little bit on the complimentary side and I will let those things slide.

Another question which I think was covered in several hon. members' remarks is the