

*Policy Statement on National Resources*

I wish to remind hon. members that the resources minister for the province of Quebec at that time was a man who has recently been prominent in the news, Mr. Rene Levesque. I always found Mr. Levesque most co-operative in matters that dealt with the development of an over-all national resource policy that would be in the best interests of the Canadian economy as a whole. If the Liberal party—and I am giving them friendly advice now—had kept Mr. Levesque occupied in this constructive and positive field rather than permitting him to detour into such divisive fields as national unity and so on, they would not have been faced with the unhappy situation which came to a head in Quebec city about a week ago.

I wish to remind hon. members that Mr. Levesque is one of the founding fathers of the resource ministers council. After that group was established he became its third chairman, functioning positively and making a real contribution during the difficult early days of that body's operation. There is a lesson for us all in this.

We ought to place emphasis on those aspects that bring us together, that unite us in common objectives and programs which are of general benefit to the nation, rather than placing emphasis on those things which divide us. We can well do without detours into such fields as national unity, biculturalism and all the other problems which have faced this parliament during the past few years.

Out of the resources for tomorrow conference came a fundamental principle which I think ought to motivate all Canadian governments. It added a new dimension to the concept of conservation. All members of the house are greatly concerned about problems of pollution and so on. I shall not delve into that aspect of the debate. We are equally concerned, I trust, about developing our resources, both renewable and non-renewable, to ensure their best economic use for the good of all our people. This is the accent that emerged from the papers, discussions and documentation of that important conservation conference.

Until then conservation had meant "preservation". By conserving we had meant that our resources would be saved simply by leaving them unused. This idea is a hangover from the frontier period of Canadian development when it was felt that our supply of resources was unlimited. Then we thought that when we had exhausted exploited and violated resources in one part of Canada we

had only to move to another part of what was considered an unlimited frontier and continue with the process of destruction. Suddenly we realized that the frontier in Canada no longer existed. We had to take a more positive approach to developing our resources.

Today we no longer merely preserve or save our resources. All our renewable resources particularly must be developed fruitfully to ensure their availability for future generations. If we are to develop our renewable resources without impairing them for future generations we must plan carefully and positively. In other words, this concept of conservation is a concept of management through which we shall bring about a continuing yield from our resources without impairing them.

● (5:00 p.m.)

The resources for tomorrow conference gave rise to the basic principles of wise management and multiple use. The government has been extremely weak on these two points. It goes from one ad hoc solution to another ad hoc solution of these problems as they arise. In other words, the government is so busy facing the urgency of the immediate that it cannot see very much beyond its nose in respect of these matters. It is the old Liberal policy of laissez-faire drifting.

Let me be specific and apply these principles to one or two areas that have been outlined in the amendment, for example, in the field of non-renewable resources such as gas and oil to which the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Hamilton) devoted almost his entire speech and for which he was so roundly criticized by the new member of the Liberal party, the hon. member for Medicine Hat. Notwithstanding the fact that the hon. member for Qu'Appelle concentrated on one point, I am afraid it went right over the heads of hon. members opposite. They have not yet come to grips with the principle that he was endeavouring to have recognized by the responsible ministers.

It was alleged that the hon. member for Qu'Appelle was criticizing the National Energy Board. This is a typical red herring technique. At another point a Liberal spokesman, I think it was the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, indicated that we on this side of the house, and in particular the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, were criticizing the United States federal power commission. If we review the hon. member's speech carefully we see he was doing neither of these things. In fact he was commending the National