

*Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys*

enlarged so as to include a scientific support role for industry in general. As I was saying earlier, we have had unique experience in the mining industry of how this could be made to work. I disagree very strongly with the hon. member for Port Arthur when he suggests that this department has really ceased to play an important role in this industry. We are increasingly faced with the problem of beneficiating lower and lower grade ores, as the hon. member for Pontiac-Témiscamingue pointed out. We are also faced with the problem of doing scientific research in Canada, which has certainly lagged and is a role we must increase. We know very little really about the earth's crust and the larger, broader scientific matters. I feel this is a very important and useful role and perhaps the emphasis of the department has shifted from one of cursory mapping—although this will continue to be an important part of the department's activities—to one of more detailed exploration and scientific examination, as well as developing new techniques in mining exploration through research, all of which is necessary if this country is to maintain the position it has achieved in the world.

I should like to see the department expanded in order to play a similar scientific support role to industry in general. I feel that with this very advanced technology into which we are running now, with the problem of automation and so on, the department could be playing a very important role. I hope the minister will be putting his sights in this direction and that the government will agree to the department's assuming the kind of role which I think it should be playing in industry generally.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Chairman, it is encouraging to see the number of members who are taking part in this discussion this afternoon. It has been characteristic of the consideration of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys estimates by the committee of the whole, that the consideration has in days gone by been rather cursory and hasty. I know there are good reasons for this fact, as the hon. member for Port Arthur intimated a moment ago. Perhaps the policy and political functions of this department are not as pressing as those of the other departments which come before this committee. I think there is also another explanation, Mr. Chairman, in the fact that the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys has operated in a very efficient fashion over the years. I do not think there

[Mr. Moreau.]

is another department of government that has established a reputation among the various aspects of the business community in Canada which would exceed the reputation of the department we now have under discussion.

It is customary to extend compliments to the men and women who are responsible for this happy state of affairs, and I join in those courtesies that have been extended by other members during this discussion. The department for many years had an outstanding deputy minister in the person of Dr. Marc Boyer who was succeeded by a man with the same qualities and qualifications, Dr. Van Steenburgh. I think these men have given the leadership to the department which has resulted in that high degree of efficiency that has been established.

Having emphasized the importance of this department I want to make some comments along the lines of those made by the hon. members for Port Arthur and York-Scarborough. It is quite true that the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys and the mining industry occupy a vital place in Canada's economy, inasmuch as they are concerned with resources development and the wise management of both renewable and non-renewable resources are of utmost importance to the continued growth of Canadian economy. I have been looking through the very excellent reports circulated by the department from time to time in respect of various Canadian minerals, and it is interesting to note that the economic upsurge which began some four years ago in Canada was strongly based on the growing strength of the Canadian mineral industry. The improved balance of payments situation that has been noted by economists in Canada in the past few years again derives in great part from this upsurge in the Canadian mineral industry. I do not have the current figures, but in 1961 when I was more intimate with this department than I am at the present time, I think something like 40 per cent of Canada's total exports were derived from the mineral industry, and the order of priority in that balance of payments situation was minerals, wheat and tourism. I understand that order is still holding—minerals out front, wheat second and tourism in a very close third position in the important role of improving Canada's balance of payments situation.

The economic upsurge which began some four years ago was stimulated and encouraged by a deliberate attempt to stabi-