

*National Research Council*

members of the committee can look forward to an informative and interesting series of meetings.

**Mr. Howard C. Green (Vancouver-Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, the statement just made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) has been both interesting and helpful. I am sure it will be of great assistance to the members of the committee in their work, and I feel confident that the minister will have no cause to regret that this committee has been set up. As the house knows, its work is merely an extension of that done by the atomic energy committee set up last session; in fact the only difference in the resolution is the substitution of the words "national research council" for "atomic energy control board." While that committee on atomic energy was very small, being composed of only fourteen members, and while none of us were scientists, the work of the committee was of the greatest help to all those who had the privilege of serving on it. The esprit de corps of that committee was higher than that of any committee on which I have served in parliament. I notice that the personnel of the committee on the national research council is the same as the committee of last year; and I look forward, as I think we all do, to a worth-while effort.

The research council was set up in 1924 and there were no amendments to the act until 1946, a year after the end of the recent war. Whether that was because the original act was so good or because not a great deal of interest was taken in the work of the research council, I do not know. As the minister has pointed out, the council did splendid work during the war, and in 1946 it was felt that the act should be amended to permit the council to carry on with the work that had been undertaken during the war years. For example, the council was given power to do more than mere research. It was given authority to carry some of its research into actual operations, and it was also given power to set up crown companies. The members of the official opposition did not think very much of that idea, nor do we think very much of it yet, but I believe only one or two companies have been set up under that power; the minister will correct me if I am wrong. The council was also given extended powers with respect to patent rights. I think it will be important for the committee to look into the activities which have been carried on under those increased powers conferred in 1946.

The minister has mentioned that the council is now engaged in research work having to do with home-building, which we all know is of the utmost importance. He has also

[Mr. Howe.]

mentioned work in connection with the Fraser river. I believe a model of the lower Fraser valley has been set up at the university of British Columbia, and on the coast we are all expecting that as a result of these studies steps will be taken to prevent the bad flooding that occurs on the Fraser river, and to make sure that that great river continues to benefit the people of that province. All these efforts are very much worth while.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, one of the fundamental beliefs of the Progressive Conservative party is that Canada's natural resources should be used in Canada to the greatest extent possible. The Minister of Trade and Commerce has had that pounded into him pretty hard over a good many weeks both last session and this session, and we hope to pound it into him even more. We believe the research council can help a great deal in making it possible for Canadians to use their natural resources at home. I was a little disappointed in the answer given by the minister yesterday with respect to prospecting for uranium. He made a statement in which he said there had been some increase in the guaranteed price, and at page 1596 of *Hansard* I asked:

Are the quantities of uranium ore now being produced considered by the government to be satisfactory?

Mr. Howe: The government has no reason to be dissatisfied. We would like to have more, but we have sufficient for our own purposes and have a surplus to sell to other friendly governments.

That was not a very enthusiastic statement. It was not the sort of answer that would get people excited about going out to look for uranium. Rightly or wrongly the people of this country believe there should be a drive to find more uranium. From the evidence given before the atomic energy committee last year I am not so sure that belief is correct; but if there is value in finding more uranium then I suggest to the minister that a more thrilling challenge should be placed before those Canadians who are interested in going out to look for uranium.

I mention that merely as an aside. We strongly favour the active promotion of scientific and industrial research in Canada. That is one reason we are very glad to see this committee set up. We believe every possible encouragement should be given our own scientists, both old and young. Those Canadian scientists who have remained in Canada have made a grand contribution to the life of the nation. Unfortunately many of our scientists, particularly young men, have been compelled to go to the United States. I hope it may be possible to keep an ever larger percentage of those brilliant young men in our own country. They are the product of our own schools and