

**Mr. Orange:** You should see all the reports on the north.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I do not say that the government has done nothing, but almost nothing. Regardless of the other issues that it raises, the trans-Alaska pipeline system has already had a good deal of work done on it. I say in all sincerity that surely here is an opportunity for the Canadian government to send observers to learn first hand some of the problems in such a major project, a project of a type that we may well be faced with in the future, perhaps before not too long. I believe that observers would have been welcome. I got that impression when I was in Alaska last month. However, none were sent. Why? I do not know.

The University of Alaska at Fairbanks is deeply involved in northern and Arctic studies. Some Canadian students go there, but there is no evidence of any interest on the part of the Canadian government about what is happening.

**Mr. Côté (Longueuil):** We know more.

**Mr. Stanfield:** The minister says we know more. I want to assure the minister that while I am certainly not an authority, I was highly impressed with the competence of the people I met at the University of Alaska.

**Mr. Orange:** How about the universities in Canada and the work they are doing?

**Mr. Stanfield:** I content myself with the fact that there has not been enough liaison with regard to what is going on in Alaska in connection with TAPS by way of research. Also, there has not been nearly enough association with the University of Alaska. There is an agreement with Russia providing for some kind of interest with regard to the north. I highly approve of that. I visited Russia last summer. It was obvious that Canada should be urged to do that. I am happy that it has been done, but we have been neglecting sources of information right next door. This is just another example of the government's lack of foresight or lack of interest. I think it is a lack of foresight. The government has obstinately refused to develop a comprehensive northern development strategy. Such an attitude is not easily forgivable.

I am not suggesting that the government should be planning to take over the northern economy. I say that the federal government has a great responsibility for and toward our country. We have an obligation to encourage its rational exploitation and to protect the environment. We must actively look into the possibilities for future transport routes and systems. The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona referred to the research that is going on in connection with certain aspects of transportation. This is good, but we must go far beyond this. We must see where airport facilities should be developed and expanded. We must see what things are possible and desirable.

Former Progressive Conservative governments did move in this field. As already pointed out, the Roads to Resources program was greeted with ridicule then and now by members opposite. Fortunately, they could not

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prevent its achievement, but they are making it clear today that they have no intention of making a contribution of their own to any integrated transportation policy.

• (4:40 p.m.)

The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona spoke about ways in which the government was helping out in the north. This is not the impression I gathered from talks with those who were actively engaged in northern development. They were full of complaints about the ineffectiveness of the government, particularly in the area of an appropriate transportation policy. In transport, as in other directions, we must develop a northern strategy, not to destroy the north but to see how it can best interrelate with the southern parts of this country. The present government's lack of such a strategy is merely a reflection of its general lack of long term policies. It has been unable to formulate policies to benefit the economies of the southern or middle parts of Canada. How, then, could we really expect it to accomplish more in the north? It has no policy to protect the environment of the coast of British Columbia threatened by the possibility of oil spillage along the proposed tanker route from Alaska to the south. How could we expect it to do better in the north? Its policies are weak in every sphere of activity and in every area of Canada. This is not the moment at which to deal with regional disparity about which so much was said two or three years ago by the Prime Minister, except to note that it is deeper now than ever it was.

We have chosen in this debate to put the spotlight on our northern land because nowhere is the ineffectiveness of the government more glaring or its failures more dangerous.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Stanfield:** It would be too much for me to ask this government to display vision in the north, or anywhere else, I suppose. I would settle for a little common sense and a spark of imagination, though there is no evidence that even this will be forthcoming. The government has not even been seeking out the information readily available to it. This is why I ask hon. members present for their support for our motion this afternoon. By passing such a motion maybe we could at least scare the government into paying a little more attention to this whole issue, and fear is, after all, sometimes the beginning of wisdom.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West):** I have followed with a great deal of interest the debate which has taken place on northern development. I listened with unusual interest to the minister's speech today. He gave the impression that everything was going well and according to plan, that the government has the development of the north well in hand. I also gathered that he and his colleagues are content to allow the present type of development to continue without much change.