

here and he agreed with me. He was quite prepared to give the evidence when the time came.

I take it that this question is too serious to have all these charges that are made go by lightly without any investigation whatever. A reference was made to that drunken survey party sent up there, and I will read what Mr. Fallow said in the provincial legislature in that regard. I do not think it should be allowed to go unchallenged:

Some time after the survey party which was sent to McMurray to investigate the oil sands, a prominent citizen of Edmonton came to my office and told me that the men in charge of this party were in his room in the Macdonald hotel the previous night. He said they proceeded to get very drunk and openly bragged that they had been sent here by the dominion government to bring in an unfavourable report in connection with the development of the oil sands.

He goes on, but that is sufficient. Mr. Fallow is definitely accusing this government of sending up a survey party to bring in a wrong report. The proper and only place where that can be investigated is before a royal commission. Then he states—this is another accusation that Mr. Fallow makes about the government in connection with the tar sands:

Instead, the dominion government appropriated another \$500,000 to investigate the possibilities of producing oil from the sands. The next move was to take possession of the property being operated by the Abasand Oil Company. Mr. Max Ball, an engineer who had been the promoter of this operation from the beginning, and who knew more about the physical operation of this process than anyone else, was immediately pushed out of the picture by the dominion government and the plant put in charge of men who knew nothing about the process.

Mr. CRERAR: I do not wish to interrupt my hon. friend, but I will deal later with what he says.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I assume that the minister will deny that.

Mr. CRERAR: I will say this. When Mr. Fallow refers to Mr. Max Ball as an oil engineer he is wholly mistaken. Mr. Ball was never an engineer at any time; he was an oil geologist.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I do not think it is of material importance whether he was an engineer or a geologist. The fact is that he was in charge of that plant; he was the man who was getting results; and after he was removed from that job, as far as practical results were concerned there were none; they just stopped. So that the only logical conclusion one could reach is that he was of some use. But the proper way in which that charge could be investigated is by a

royal commission which would go into the whole question. Here is another statement made during the course of this speech:

Shortly after the dominion government took control of the property strange things began to happen. Out of the north came an endless procession of weird, incredulous stories of criminal incompetence and scandalous waste of public funds and charges of sabotage were heard on every hand.

Then listen to this:

So persistent were these ugly rumours we decided to investigate and we found there was ample justification for the rumours.

In other words, this cabinet minister in Edmonton made certain charges, which he said were so serious that an investigation was held, and it was found that there was ample ground for such rumours. You cannot take that lightly and just dismiss it as nothing. The government have some responsibility in this regard; they are being accused by a man who should know what he is talking about. If he does not know what he is talking about he should be brought to account, but if these things are true those who are responsible should be brought to account. I do not agree at all with the hon. member for Davenport when he says that this government is not to blame, and that no blame should be attached to the minister.

Mr. MacNICOL: I did not say that the government was not to blame, but I did not criticize the minister.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I am going farther than that, then; I am going to criticize the minister. I do not criticize him as an individual; it is not a personal matter in any way, but the minister must accept responsibility for the things done in his department. These charges are a reflection upon the government of this country, and they cannot be lightly dismissed. As I said, after hearing of these charges there was an investigation, and it was proved to Mr. Fallow's satisfaction that there was ample justification for these rumours. Here is another charge which I do not think can be overlooked; further in his remarks Mr. Fallow had this to say:

To add to the antics of this crazy circus, someone poured sand in the oil boxes and pans of the machinery working on the job, putting all out of commission at one time.

That is a deliberate act of sabotage, and in time of war we should not permit such things to be carried on in this country, especially when they affect the production of oil. I do not know whether that statement is true, but I do know it was made by a cabinet minister of Alberta. Once more I say that the only proper way to investigate these matters is to appoint a royal commission. Just a