

Supply—National Defence

some of my colleagues, I had the painful duty of explaining to the government the importance of the work of farmers, railwaymen, miners, makers of uniforms, arms, ammunition and so on.

Mr. Fulton: And the Temiscouata railway.

Mr. Pouliot: I have compassion for the hon. member, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Fulton: I am grateful for it.

Mr. Pouliot: I discuss a matter which is vital to farmers, miners and those engaged in essential work, and an hon. member of the opposition speaks platitudes when I discuss that matter seriously. I am very sorry for him. In one sense he is fortunate, in that his constituents are not in the gallery here to judge his performance as it deserves to be judged.

Mr. Fulton: They are fortunate, because they would have to listen to you for an hour and a half.

Mr. Pouliot: My speeches are reported in full in the local newspaper, and there is not a man or woman in my county who ignores what I say. They approve it, too.

Mr. Fulton: They do not know anything better.

Mr. Pouliot: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have been told to have pity, to be full of compassion, and I am. There are occasions when one has a duty to defend men who are doing a great service, such as the farmers, the miners, the railwaymen and many others. If all those men were brought into the army what would be the result? The result would be that there would be no transportation system; there would be no munitions and no arms available; the soldiers would not have the uniforms that they need; they would not be fed, and so on.

Now, sir, I am very glad that we do not hear very much about the advisory council on manpower. I am a supporter of the government, and I hope—

Mr. Harkness: God knows why you are a supporter of the government.

Mr. Pouliot: Because it is a good government.

Mr. Harkness: I am beginning to lose confidence in your judgment.

Mr. Pouliot: Well, my hon. friend could not say that to the hon. member for Nanaimo, who has shown that he is broadminded and recognizes the merit of the government in doing things that are sensible, especially with regard to manpower and with regard to the defence of this country. The leader of the opposition knows very well that what we

[Mr. Pouliot.]

need for our defence in this country is mobile units. Naturally, the R.C.A.F. is the best weapon for our defence. He will not deny it.

Now, sir, I regret that I have spoken at such length.

Some hon. Members: So do we.

Mr. Pouliot: I understand it. I have one thing to say in conclusion, and you will be surprised, sir, to hear me congratulate the opposition on their stand since the beginning of the war. When I say that, I refer to all the groups forming the opposition. During the last war—I would say with the exception of the hon. member for Peel when he was leader of the opposition—the fanaticism that existed in the Conservative ranks was something beyond words. I remember very well the hon. member who was leader of the opposition before the hon. member for Peel was so fanatic—he was praising the members of the government and handing them bouquets—that I had to compare him to Ferdinand the bull with a daisy in his mouth for each one of the cabinet ministers. He did not know that Ferdinand the bull was one of Disney's characters, and he was mad about it. He wanted me to withdraw, and I told him that I would withdraw everything except the bull.

Mr. Fulton: That is about your level.

An hon. Member: This is history.

Mr. Harkness: So said the bull calf.

Mr. Fulton: When you have withdrawn everything, that is all that is left, the bull.

Mr. Pouliot: I am not accustomed to understanding the language of the hon. member for Kamloops.

Mr. Fulton: No, only when you are using it.

Mr. Pouliot: I am surprised that a gentleman of his refinement used language like that. I find it more pitiful than ever. Notwithstanding what has been said, I do want to compliment the opposition on the progress that they have made since the last war. It may be due in large measure to the great leadership of the hon. leader of the opposition. I say that very seriously. I know that in his party there are some active elements that he has to control. He has done it with tact, and I sincerely congratulate him. To show that I have no prejudice, I sympathize with him. I remember all the bellicose gentlemen who were going to war all the time, and who wanted some more information about strategy to inform the enemy. This must end. I am sure that if