

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

officials in his department prepared and submitted to the Gordon commission in November, 1955, I think it was—or 1957, I am not sure of the date—

**An hon. Member:** You are all mixed up.

**Mr. Hardie:** I cannot carry all this in my mind—

**Mr. Nielsen:** It is a wonder you have been able to carry the little that you have.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Hardie:** If all I had to carry in my mind were some of the silly interjections made from across there, that would be a simple proposition. In any event, the minister on July 7 told the Leader of the Opposition that if the former government had been in power he doubted if there ever would have been a railroad. I want to put the record straight. In September of 1957 the former government asked the Canadian National Railways to do an economic and route survey of a railroad from Alberta to the south shore of Great Slave lake. The report on that survey has never been tabled in this house, although I have been asking for it ever since November last.

This government received the report on that survey, not the former government. This government is the government which could have acted on its recommendation. What have they done? They have withdrawn all chance of building a railroad this year; they have withdrawn the promise they gave to the people of Canada in the speech from the throne and in particular the promise they gave to the people of the Northwest Territories; they have withdrawn all those things and today we have no bill for a railroad.

I suggest to the minister, and I am sure the hon. member for Peace River would agree with this, that if the minister cannot convince his cabinet colleagues that a bill should be introduced this session to build 400 miles of railroad from wherever it might be, Waterways or Grimshaw, then he should ask his colleagues and the railroad companies to assist him to introduce a bill this session to start construction of a railroad from Grimshaw, Alberta to Fort Vermilion, Alberta, an area which is already settled and which is composed of agricultural land.

The hon. member for Peace River can and has told this house the great benefits offered by that area, so let us bring in a bill this session to this end and then, during the following session, bring in a bill to extend that measure into the timber rich areas of the Wood Buffalo park or Fort Smith area and then, and if the Consolidated

Mining and Smelting Company, which controls the biggest lead and zinc deposit in North America and possibly in the world, will give assurance to the government that they will open up their property when the road is complete we could take off a branch line from Fort Vermilion and run it north to Pine Point and terminate it up at Hay River where we have an open port and where we can transship the freight carried into Hay River down the Mackenzie river and along the Arctic coast or across to Great Slave lake into Yellowknife and into the mining country.

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** Before recess the hon. member for Mackenzie River was asking about the report and I collected this information in the meantime. The northern service officers send monthly reports to the department in Ottawa, which are supplemented by interim reports at all times. There is no report from this particular northern service officer for the month of February, as he was absent on duty in Eskimo Point. There is however a report from this officer on file and in a moment I am going to ask the permission of the committee to read this report into the record, and then ask to table it tomorrow because it is the only copy we have. If the committee will accept this I think it will give as full information as we have in the department.

As to the cache which has been talked about it was located at Pelly lake near an abandoned air strip and an abandoned house. It was left there by Spartan Airways. The contents were some food left over after a Spartan Airways construction job and was left as a gift to the local Eskimos under our supervision.

**Mr. Hardie:** I wonder if the minister could tell the committee on what date that cache was left?

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** I think the report will mention the date, within a day or so. In addition, we took in from the department 2,400 pounds in two trips and this, too, will show up in the report. There was an Eskimo placed in charge with explicit instructions as to what he should do with this food.

I should like to read this report into the record now, and, since it is the only copy, I should like to have permission to table it tomorrow.

**The Chairman:** I believe the hon. gentleman could actually read the report into the record. That would be sufficient. And if the Minister of Northern Affairs wishes to table the report tomorrow he can, of course,