

little of it, is earmarked for the northern country. Would the minister tell us just what the government has in mind in the way of promoting the development of northern Canada?

Mr. CRERAR: My hon. friend is now discussing a matter which should be discussed when the ordinary civil estimates of the department are before the committee.

Mr. GREEN: I think the minister is not quite right about that, because several of these items deal with expenditures for research and for finding new mines and oil wells and so on. Surely under items of this type we are entitled to ask the policy of the government with regard to developing northern Canada.

Mr. CRERAR: Under these war appropriation estimates we could make excursions into every branch of departmental activity. In the ordinary civil estimates of the mines branch we have an item of \$314,000 for geological surveys, and it is under that vote that the work as to which my hon. friend is pressing for information—and it is very important work—would be carried out, and the details can then be given. As I stated a moment ago, this item of \$145,000 may not be spent this year at all. It is in the war appropriation for war purposes, to meet requests from the oil controller should such requests be made; also perhaps a small part of it is to complete undertakings of last year where the vote lapsed at the end of the year. In addition, provision will be made from this vote for whatever drilling operations are carried on in this area of oil sands in northern Alberta.

Mr. GREEN: Well, could the minister give us some idea now of the policy of the government with regard to developing northern Canada? It really is a war item. For example, we have what is known as the joint Canadian-United States economic committee, and a branch of that committee was given the job of surveying all the resources in the Yukon, Alaska and northern British Columbia and of making recommendations as to what developments should take place in those areas. Could the minister not give us some idea of the general government policy on the development of the north country? It is probably one of the most important matters which faces Canada to-day. Its importance is evidenced by developments which Russia has made.

Mr. CRERAR: I do not for a moment deny its importance, but the information which would fully satisfy the questions of my hon. friend is not here to-night, because I expected to deal with the subject when the

ordinary estimates of the department were up. The government has not been unmindful of the possibilities of the north country. I just asked the director of the mines branch, who tells me that last year we had two geological survey parties in the Yukon territory.

Mr. GREEN: Two?

Mr. CRERAR: Two. I do not know how many there were in the Northwest Territories, but almost every week, perhaps every day, in the summer months mining claims are being recorded in our mining recording office at Fort Smith by prospectors. As my hon. friend knows, there has been a substantial mining development in the Yellowknife district north of Slave lake, and we have had geological parties there for several years. In addition, we are sending out this year oil geological parties; that is, parties to search for oil deposits.

Mr. GREEN: In the Northwest Territories?

Mr. CRERAR: Some in the Northwest Territories, some in Alberta, some in Saskatchewan and some in the northeastern part of British Columbia. But I could have more complete information on all that when I have the data before me to deal with the civil estimates.

Mr. GREEN: Perhaps to-morrow the minister could make a statement on the northern policy of the government.

Mr. CRERAR: Well, that can be done, perhaps, when we come to our ordinary civil estimates.

Mr. GREEN: That may not be until the last five minutes of the last day of the session, and would not leave any time for discussion. I think the minister should make the statement at once.

Mr. CRERAR: All I can say in a general way, Mr. Chairman—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Golding): The minister has pointed out that this item has nothing to do with the question which the hon. member for Vancouver South has in mind, and he has promised that he will deal with it at the proper time. I appeal to hon. members to realize that if we hope to make any progress at all in these estimates we must try to deal with the items as they are. I hope I shall not have to say any more in that regard to hon. members.

Mr. GRAYDON: Are you speaking to the minister too?

[Mr. Green.]