

*Supply—Resources and Development*

**Mr. Knowles:** I submit that anyone looking at those answers will agree with me that there is simply no answer there at all. The answer to No. 3, which merely sets out general policy, is not an answer to my specific questions as to the number of persons employed, the amount of money spent, the persons to whom contracts were awarded, or the areas in which such works were undertaken. If the minister did not wish to answer those questions, he should have said so. But to say that those questions are covered by the answer to No. 3 is, to say the least, annoying.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** There are two matters I should like to bring to the attention of the minister now instead of waiting for their being called in regular order, because I have to attend the committee on agriculture.

My first question is in connection with national parks and historic sites services, and the national battlefields commission. As the committee knows, in the rebellion of 1885, the outcome of which was the preservation for Canada of what is now known as Saskatchewan, and in which numbers of volunteers from eastern Canada lost their lives, the battles in northern Saskatchewan were fought in the main at Batoche and Fish Creek, adjacent to Prince Albert; and then in the area around North Battleford at Fort Pitt and Cut Knife. These particular areas today are remembered by many as the scene of the last warfare that took place in Canada for the preservation and perpetuation of this union.

I would point out particularly, to begin with, the situation at Batoche, which is located some miles east of Duck Lake. That is where one of the battles of the rebellion was fought, and it was the first place where trenches were used in warfare. Today all that remains to indicate that one of the most important battles of the rebellion was fought there are the trenches, which at this time are only six or seven inches deep, having been filled in by the erosion which has taken place over a period of sixty-five years. There and at Fish Creek a number of volunteers lie buried, as well as numbers of metis and Indians who fought in those two battles. There is nothing to indicate that these are two of the great historic sites in Saskatchewan—nothing other than a small monument erected on the banks of the Saskatchewan river at Batoche through private contributions. There is nothing to indicate that Batoche and Fish Creek are indeed two shrines that should be preserved as such.

Having visited over the years a number of our memorial gardens, as I choose to call them, I submit that these two places, and the

other to which I have made reference, should receive attention by the department even at this time. As I have pointed out, Batoche represented the first occasion on which trenches were used in warfare. One can still walk over that area and relive the romance of the days of the fur trader, of the metis, of Gabriel Dumont, the greatest metis leader of his time and the greatest buffalo hunter of North America, not excepting Buffalo Bill. By taking action in this matter the minister would be doing something worth-while for the maintenance of Canadian tradition and the cementing of the unity that today prevails among the whites, the metis and the Indians in that area, many of whom are descendants of those who participated on either side of that rebellion.

My first request is that these two areas be set aside as historic sites. The area does not amount to more than fifteen or twenty acres in each case, and these lands should be purchased by the Canadian government. In the years to come Canadians will look at these sites as being places worthy of preservation, because they represent battlefields, though they are small in comparison with modern battlefields, which are significant in that what occurred there contributed so much to the building of western Canada.

The second suggestion I bring to the attention of the minister has to do with Watrous lake, which lies partly in my constituency. Were this a matter that concerned only my own constituency I would not refer to it now. Since 1750, according to legend and history, Watrous lake has been regarded, first by the Indians and latterly by the settlers who came into the west, as a lake containing medicinal properties of great value. The lake is drying up, and in a matter of a few years will have disappeared unless something is done nationally to preserve it. The history of western Canada indicates that as early as 1750 Indians from as far east as Fort William and as far south as southern Nebraska made pilgrimages there to take advantage of the medicinal properties of this lake. Within the last twenty-five or thirty years many people suffering from arthritis, rheumatism and similar ills have found relief by bathing in the waters of this lake. It is several miles in length, and apparently the outlets of the springs are being closed off through the operation of the salts in the water. An expenditure on this lake by the national government would pay dividends that could not be estimated at this time. I know I speak for hon. members from all parts of Saskatchewan, and not just as one in whose constituency this lake is partly situated, when I say that anything done in this connection would be appreciated.