

Supply—Northern Affairs

Mr. Bell (Carleton): "Words".

Mr. Baldwin: Actions speak louder than words. When the bill preceding the legislation in respect of one of the foundation plans for northern development, the Pine Point railroad, was before this house last session, hon. members of the opposition voted against it on two occasions. On one occasion they voted for a six months' hoist.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. gentleman. Hon. members realize that I have allowed a fair amount of latitude in this debate, and I hope I have not asked for difficulties in so doing. The reference by the hon. member for Peace River to the Pine Point railway is, I think, all together out of order when you consider the item which is before the committee.

Mr. Baldwin: I accept your ruling. I felt I had to make some observation, however, in view of what has been said.

This item covers some aspects of provision for national parks, historic sites and monuments and I would make this suggestion to the minister—that having in mind the opposition which has been put forward by both the official opposition and by the C.C.F.-N.D.P. to this appropriation and other matters of northern development it might be well for him in the course of his duties to set apart certain historic monuments upon which at a later date he might hope to place some of the few remaining members of the opposition parties who will be around after the next election as a result of the opposition which they have put forward.

I wish to endorse what has been said by the minister and by the hon. member for the Yukon in connection with this project in Dawson city. The road into this area goes through the Peace River area for a distance of several hundreds of miles. One day last summer, driving from Edmonton toward Grande Prairie I saw a large number of cars with United States licences. Indeed, I estimated that two thirds of the cars on that highway were cars from the United States on their way to Alaska. As the hon. member for the Yukon has said, when the Alaska highway becomes of particular interest to the government of the United States and ultimately is paved—it is not a question of "if" but a question of "when"—the amount of traffic going into that area will be fantastic. I commend the minister and those in his department who have taken an interest in this matter for setting up programs which will attract these tourists off the highway into Dawson city and other parts of the Yukon. I think the time will come when we shall appreciate what the minister and his department have

done, and what other people who are interested have done in connection with projects of this nature.

I also want to say to the minister that I have watched with sympathy and understanding his efforts to dedicate and set aside areas in this country for recreational purposes. I think it is essential at this time in the development of our country when we still have these large areas available, many miles remote from settlements, that we should take the opportunity to preserve them before it is too late. We should take this opportunity while it is available at a relatively low cost and avoid the difficulties which have arisen with the United States where it has become increasingly hard to find space for recreational purposes for the rapidly increasing population.

I commend the minister for visiting the district which I represent and flying into an area which has been proposed as a national park site—the so-called Moncton pass district. I realize it lies completely outside the minister's authority to do anything about this until the government of British Columbia has dedicated this area for use by the national government as a park, but I think his interest is most worth while and I hope he keeps up his good work in that regard.

Included among the parks under the jurisdiction of the minister is the Wood Buffalo park, one of the largest in this country; in fact I believe it is the largest on this continent. Some 15,000 square miles of this park lie within the geographical borders of the province of Alberta. I know that a motion recently made in the legislative assembly in Alberta calls for that part of the park which lies within the province of Alberta to be turned over by the federal government to the province of Alberta. Part of this park lies within my own constituency. A large part lies within the constituency of the hon. member for Athabasca with whom I have discussed this matter from time to time. This park is the summer home of the almost extinct whooping crane. In this park are some 16,000 wood buffalo, probably the largest herd of these animals still in existence. I would be most reluctant to see this government take any hasty action, should this particular notice of motion in the Alberta legislature be accepted and should it become a matter of government policy in that province to urge this particular course. It may well be that the park is so large and of such a nature that certain areas might be carved out and made available for industrial development, though I must say I would view this with some misgivings. Such proposals would require examination and assessment by those who are better qualified to reach an opinion with regard to them than I am. I bring this