

*Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys*

have drawn the attention, not only of prospectors, but also of mining companies which are trying to establish themselves there.

I feel it my duty to emphasize that people in my district are keenly interested in the setting up of the zinc refinery to which I referred earlier.

I understand that the federal government may not have the last say in the granting of licences, and that, in fact, it does not deal directly with the development of natural resources which, according to our constitution, come under the jurisdiction of the provinces; nevertheless, it is surely in the interest of the federal government that the northern areas be developed, and that the ore be processed on the spot, which means that a refinery be set up where the ore is to be found, for this will also help to bring about industrial decentralization.

To give you an idea of what I have in mind, here is an example. A campaign is being waged to convince the authorities of the mining company that the construction of a zinc refinery in our area would be not only justifiable but most advantageous from all points of view.

Let us remember what happened a few years ago when the Quebec Lithium Corporation decided to build a lithium refinery at Rouses Point, in the state of New York. Later on, after having considered the matter thoroughly from the economic point of view, the corporation decided to build the plant on its mining property in the township of La Corne, in the vicinity of Barraute and Landrienne, two communities of my constituency. The corporation had therefore decided to build its refinery on its mining property in the township of La Corne rather than in Rouses Point. Now, the main reasons which led Quebec Lithium Corporation to take that decision was that the transportation of ore concentrates had become too expensive because of the great distance and also because a great proportion of the loads consisted of waste or just simply rock. Consequently, the money the company could have made by selling its by-products in the United States and in the more heavily industrialized centres like Montreal, could not compare with the savings it could make by processing its ore on the spot and by building its refinery on its mining property, in the township of La Corne.

I think that example is appropriate in view of the problem raised by the construction of a zinc refinery in my area. The Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys stated this morning that a large proportion of our ore except iron ore, of course, is already being processed on the spot in Canada before being exported. We should not

[Mr. Martel.]

remain idle and rest on our laurels, however, because a lot remains to be done yet. Even if 60 per cent of our zinc is already being refined in Canada, that is certainly no reason to stop there.

If that project were carried out, following the example set by Quebec Lithium Corporation in northern Quebec, it would be advantageous for eastern Canada, not to mention the fact that the processing of our ore in Canada would be a step in the right direction. Of course, I would rather have that industry set up in Abitibi. I could give you other examples since a high percentage of other metals such as copper and nickel are refined in Canada, a situation which is beneficial to our economy. The construction of a nickel refinery at Thompson lake in northern Manitoba is also a striking example of what should be done to develop our natural resources in the north.

Before passing on to another subject, I should like to make a brief reference to an editorial published the other day in *L'Echo Abitibien*. It called the public's attention to this zinc refinery project, indicating that certain mining magnates were perhaps preparing to pull a fast one on the people in Abitibi.

Well, we do not want to let this pass unnoticed and we refuse to be done in. Therefore, I feel bound to point out this important matter so that our area may benefit from the setting up of this refinery.

I do not think I need insist in order to prove that it would be profitable economically to build this plant in our area. It has been mentioned time and again in the press, and in the railway committee when the building of a branch line through that area was being considered. It was pointed out then that it was essential to settle first the matter of selling the by-products. Of course, I have no figures here and I have not figured out the returns, but local, departmental and mining company economists could surely do it. Anyway, I do not believe that the profits from by-products would be enough to offset the cost of bringing over long distances to the refineries an ore made up mostly of waste. Besides, I believe that the Federation of Abitibi chambers of commerce has figured out the costs involved and will submit a report to provincial authorities.

Allow me to make a point on this subject. I wonder what would be the reaction of industrial towns located along the St. Lawrence