

Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys

mines branch before dealing with the coal board, and if that will suit hon. members, on the next occasion I will have the advice of the officials from the dominion coal board.

Mr. Herridge: If I am allowed, I want only a few minutes to say a few things. I have been sitting here all afternoon because I am very interested in this department, which is one of the departments which rather hides its light under a bushel. I am interested because of the geographical, topographical, geological and resource development of the mining industry in the Kootenays. I was interested in the remarks made by various speakers such as the hon. member for Port Arthur and the former minister, with respect to the organization and reorganization of the department.

This is strictly a scientific research and technological department, which is fortunately not subjected to the day to day buffeting of political partisan questions, and I think it is a good idea to keep the department within those confines. I shall not go into questions of reorganization or things of that sort, but I do suggest as a result of the discussion this afternoon that it is obvious a good many members are not aware of the over-all services performed by the department.

Though it is too late this session, I suggest that the estimates of this department should be referred to the committee on mines, forests and waters where the departmental officials would have an opportunity to explain to members of the committee the services they perform, what I consider a sort of socialistic service provided for free enterprise, and where the officials could answer questions.

Mr. Benidickson: I would welcome that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Herridge: I am delighted to hear the minister say so—where they, with the better knowledge of the functions of the department and the services it is performing, can give consideration to what can be done to increase still further the assistance it is rendering to the Canadian people as a whole and to industry in particular.

These are the few remarks I have to make at this time. I am glad to hear that the minister is agreeable to my suggestion.

Item agreed to.

Mining and metallurgical investigations and research—

35. Administration, operation and maintenance including Canada's share of the cost of the commonwealth committee on mineral processing and \$50,000 for grants in aid of mining and mineral processing research in Canadian universities, \$4,985,000.

Mr. Churchill: I should like to ask the minister in connection with this item what progress has been made in research activities concerning other uses for uranium. There was some activity a few years ago in connection with the discovery of other uses for this metal—using it to strengthen steel, for example. Has this been a successful research operation? I think the department has some connection with the work which was being undertaken.

Mr. Benidickson: The hon. gentleman had some responsibilities in this field in the past and he will recognize that this is an inter-departmental affair involving the present Department of Industry and the Department of Trade and Commerce as well as the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys. Some developments have taken place. Some alloys have been developed which look as though they may be useful in conjunction with uranium. Such information obtained from government research has been made available to the steel companies of the land, but that is about as far as I can go.

Item agreed to.

Geographical surveys and research—

45. Administration, operation and maintenance including the expenses of the Canadian permanent committee on geographical names and the national committee for Canada of the international geographical union, Canada's fee for membership in the international geographical union and a grant of \$500 to the Canadian association of geographers, \$653,000.

Mr. Martineau: Would the minister say a word about the upper mantle project? Is it still being carried on?

Mr. Benidickson: Yes, it is continuing. It is a project with which the hon. gentleman was very familiar when he was minister. It has not yet been completed.

Item agreed to.

Research in astronomy and geophysics—

55. Construction or acquisition of buildings, works, land and equipment, \$944,000.

Mr. Rapp: Could the minister explain the increase in payments under the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act in 1964-65 compared with the previous year?

Mr. Benidickson: The terms of payment came before parliament last year and the only change was a restrictive one which meant that no longer would we make payments under the act except to mines where 50 per cent of the employees were already within an existing community. The reason for the increase