

Supply—Northern Affairs

the Department of National Defence would some day be a completely civilian operation based on the economics of the area, in other words, mining operations on Baffin island. I should like to repeat now what I have repeated on every occasion I have had the opportunity, that development in the north in such remote places as Frobisher Bay has a very important bearing on the people who live in Montreal, Toronto or any other part of Canada.

One of the members from northern Ontario spoke of the natural route that existed from Hudson bay through Moosonee and by the Ontario Northland railway to northern Ontario. The eastern Arctic area is rich in iron. Hudson bay does provide a two-months longer shipping season. This is a natural route and more is going on than most people are aware of to turn into reality this academic idea of taking the iron in one place and by using a traditional communication route transporting it to another place where the iron and the energy resource can be brought together.

The hon. member for Timiskaming is not here but I should like to remind him that the future of northern Ontario, which for so many years the people there have dreamed about and worked so hard to achieve, is much closer than they realize. Through northern Ontario now passes a pipe line that carries natural gas. This pipe line has in it the energy resource which, when applied to such a commodity as iron, may well mean a revolution in development as far as northern Ontario is concerned.

Without saying any more than what I have just said, I should like to point out that those who make derogatory remarks about this so-called vision are doing a disservice to the people who have pioneered these areas with instinctive faith that something good was going to come from it. I feel not only in my heart but on the basis of the information I have that, having regard to the accessibility of the northern part of Ontario to the resources of iron and other metals of the north and to the industrial area of the south, the future of that area has not yet begun to be appreciated or to show its full potential.

I can only speak in general terms and the record over the years will have to be my witness whether or not I was right, but I do feel that the northern areas of provinces such as Ontario have a great future. I should like to do everything within my power, within the constitutional limits of the department, to help these things along because I think it is for the good of all Canadians.

Some mention has been made of the fact that I used the phrase "national chagrin"

on one occasion. I do not back down from that expression. I am ashamed of the fact that through circumstances beyond the power of almost anyone here we have had to share responsibility, in fact, give all responsibility for the defence of our northern area to a friendly power. The things that have happened are no doubt small but employees of the government of Canada and even ministers have to go through a formal procedure of getting permission. When Canadians have to wait several months to get permission to go and do their duty in their own country at the direction of their own minister, I do not apologize to the house or the country for saying that I am ashamed of the situation.

Mr. Pearson: The minister is dealing with a point which is of great interest and I should like to ask him whether it is a fact that Canadian ministers and officials have to wait several months before they can get access to establishments on Canadian soil under the control, by agreement with the Canadian government, of the United States. Is it several months?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Ministers have very little trouble. Formal request is made more or less as a matter of courtesy and it is handled very quickly but nevertheless this procedure still has to be followed. The situation is different in the case of departmental officials wanting to go there in their line of duty. I do not want to embarrass any of my colleagues by referring to a case on record but I do know of one case where the request took so long to approve that the man went somewhere else and got another job and the work has not been done to this day.

The Deputy Chairman: I am sorry but I have to advise the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources that his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Go ahead.

The Deputy Chairman: Has the minister unanimous consent of the committee to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Chairman, I cannot answer all these comments, but I will wind up in this way.

Mr. Pickersgill: Let the minister go right on and finish.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): I am more concerned about making the policy statement clear and explaining my own position with regard to the remark I made. As far as I am concerned, I do not blame anyone for