

many years I have been a member of parliament, but in all kindness to my hon. friend I must say that I have never heard in all that time a more ridiculous or more absurd suggestion than that we should put this country to the expense of a royal commission to investigate the government's responsibility for someone throwing sand into the bearings of the machinery.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I never said that, and the minister knows that very well.

Mr. CRERAR: My hon. friend urged it as a reason why a royal commission should be appointed.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): The minister knows very well I did not say that at all. He is just trying to get out of a difficult position.

Mr. CRERAR: And this was said on his own responsibility. He said that the government have spent over a million dollars and had nothing to show for it.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I said about a million—and it is not far from it.

Mr. CRERAR: "About a million?"

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Yes.

Mr. CRERAR: We are right on that, then. He has said that the government has spent about a million dollars, and has nothing to show for it.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Well, not much.

Mr. CRERAR: Is my hon. friend serious in that?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Yes, absolutely.

Mr. CRERAR: Well, for the life of me I cannot understand how my hon. friend reaches some of the extraordinary conclusions he ultimately arrives at.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Results are what count.

Mr. CRERAR: A million dollars spent, and nothing to show for it? Let me tell my hon. friend a few of the things there are to show for it. For instance, there has been a very considerable amount of drilling done on the sand-bearing land, to determine the quality of the sand, the depth of overburden, and how expensive it might be to get it out.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Only \$33,000 spent on that.

Mr. CRERAR: And that is something. In addition, very considerable tests and examinations have been made by the Universal Oil

[Mr. Crerar.]

Products Company of Chicago to determine what extraction should be made from the bitumen. I gave that information to the committee this afternoon. In the third place, the plant has been redesigned and rebuilt.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): And torn down and rebuilt again.

Mr. CRERAR: The separation part of the plant is completed; and the refinery end of it will be ready for operation by September. In addition, all the other things necessary to carry out a thorough and continuous test of the possibilities of the sands are almost completed. Yet my hon. friend rises in his place in this house and says, "You have spent a million dollars, and have not anything to show for it."

Again he is simply retailing some of the gossip indulged in by Mr. Fallow. Or perhaps there was some other hotel in Alberta where someone was intoxicated, and told someone else something, and that someone else told someone else, and that someone else came and told Mr. Fallow that they had wasted a million dollars; and Mr. Fallow gets up in the legislature and wields that as a weapon of attack on the federal government.

There is just one other observation I have to make. Mr. Fallow states that the federal government is trying to sabotage this whole development. He seeks to leave the impression, and my hon. friend gives support to the allegation, that we are more interested in preventing successful development of tar sands than in anything else. Mr. Fallow says that this wretched government at Ottawa have no interest in developing the tar sands; that they are trying to sabotage the project. My hon. friend will not dispute that that was the tenor of Mr. Fallow's remarks.

But Mr. Fallow has a perfectly good remedy right in his own hands. Of the whole vast area of oil-bearing sands the federal government controls about 2,000 acres. Where does the control of the rest lie, of ninety-nine per cent of these oil-bearing sands? It lies absolutely with the province of Alberta.

Mr. Fallow accuses us of giving away some of the federal government's small area, 100 out of 2,000 acres. That is one indictment he levelled against us in his speech in the Alberta legislature. But he did not tell the legislature and the country, and my hon. friend has not told this committee, that the government of which Mr. Fallow is a member gave large concessions to the Abasand company out of its own resources.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): That has nothing to do with the matter.

Mr. CRERAR: It has something to do with it.