

Supply—Northern Affairs

in a television broadcast on March 3, 1960, which were as follows. I quote from the text of that broadcast. The Prime Minister was dealing with the roads to resources program in the Yukon and Northwest Territories and he said that at that time, namely March, 1960, federal expenditure had been about \$20 million and that 600 or 700 miles of unprotected new roads and bridges were under way at that time. In the same broadcast, in regard to this program, he said that the maximum expenditure envisaged was \$150 million and that agreements had been signed to cover this. He then went on to say in the broadcast that this program in the north provided for the building of an additional 4,000 miles of roads to tap the new resources of the north and that the total expenditure—that was March, 1960—at that time committed, amounted to \$135 million. It will be interesting to compare these figures put on the air a year ago with what the minister has given us this afternoon.

Mr. Nielsen: May I ask the Leader of the Opposition a question before he resumes his seat. Does he now agree that the roads to resources in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories—the development roads—are a sound policy on behalf of the government in developing the whole nation including that 40 per cent of the nation above the 60th parallel, or does he still adhere to his igloo to igloo statement which he made in 1957 and 1958?

Mr. Pearson: I am very glad the hon. member has given me an opportunity to say something about this. He has asked me whether I now adhere to the position that the roads to resources program in the north is important to the development of that country. Well, of course, Mr. Chairman, I have always taken that position and I made statements to that effect long before the hon. member came into the House of Commons. Nothing could be more important to the development of the northern area than roads, communication and transport generally. There is no question about that. What I also say is that statements made in 1957 and 1958 by the Prime Minister and others that this roads to resources program—it was not called that then—this road-building program in the north, this great program of public works in the north, which included road building, was a phony one in so far as correcting the unemployment situation was concerned. If the hon. member will read the statements I made at that time—I repeat them now—he will find that I said this kind of program as a cure for unemployment was completely unrealistic. That has been shown since that time by the figures that have been given, not by the

present minister but by his predecessor, which indicated how much employment was being given by this program.

So far as development is concerned, no one underestimates their importance. But the Arctic road program as a cure never had anything but visionary, political importance attached to it. As a development program, nothing could be more important. As a program for curing unemployment, well, nothing could be more calculated to deceive the people than some of the statements made at that time on the employment aspects of this activity.

I think it should also be pointed out that while it is extremely important to develop the Arctic, it is also important to redevelop some of the older parts of the country where the economy is now slack and where unemployment is now very high. These two things have to go together, both development and redevelopment, in a healthy and balanced economy.

Mr. Nielsen: I might just say that the Leader of the Opposition still has not yet answered my question.

First of all, may I say that I have read very carefully within the last week the 1957 and 1958 statements of both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, and my recollection of those statements is that the unemployment situation was not to be met by roads being built in the north but by national public works. The Leader of the Opposition made several statements throughout the west during 1957 and 1958 in which he referred to the northern development roads as roads from igloo to igloo. He said so in Saskatchewan and also in British Columbia. He selected one particular road in the Yukon running from Flat Creek into the potential oil and gas fields of the Yukon as being a road from igloo to igloo.

If the Leader of the Opposition will read the statistics which I put on the record on May 4, 1961, to be found at page 4384 of *Hansard*, he will see that this road from igloo to igloo, as he termed it then, has increasing significance now when oil and gas revenue has increased from a figure of \$8,344,579 for the period 1953 to 1956 to a figure of \$32,599,956 for the period 1957 to 1960. He will also recall, I am sure, that the first oil well in the Yukon came in the year before last, the Chance No. 2, and that the Hope No. 1 well is now in the process of being drilled. Does he still feel that this road is a road from igloo to igloo?

Mr. Pearson: I cannot resist the invitation to prolong this discussion for a moment. When the hon. member talks about northern roads, whether they are from igloo to igloo or from