

Supply—Northern Affairs

we have a determination to avoid these mistakes, if possible, in our country as far as the future development and efficient use of those resources.

We do not have to go very far beyond this capital city of Ottawa to see a striking example of that very thing to which the minister has referred. We had at one time, within a distance of 200 or 300 miles, one of the greatest stands of white pine possibly in the world. Today, like the caribou of the north country, this white pine is practically extinct. Surely that is a shining example of something we cannot afford to have happen in this country. There was a time possibly when the resources of this country were believed to be unlimited. We could permit people to go through and ravish the countryside for miles and miles, and what did it matter? There was lots of undeveloped country farther along. Certainly we have had it demonstrated to us that that is not the case. At one time the people of the United States thought the same thing, that their resources were unlimited; that it was quite all right to allow people to run riot across the country because there was always the horizon beckoning them farther along. Certainly, that is not so and I, for one, am pleased to see that the minister realizes it is not so. He goes on to say:

Because we have great reserves of minerals of all kinds, Canada is a great centre of interest in an economic-political way. For that reason, some consideration and logic had to come in respect of exploitation of these resources.

Mr. Chairman, I say it is about time we got some reason and logic into the use and exploitation of our resources in this country. On page 20 of the report we find the following remarks:

—there is no use in doing all this work if there is not some thought given to a long range conservation concept of the most efficient use of those resources.

A little farther down, in the second paragraph, he said:

—I want to make it clear that unless we formulate a plan for the use of our resources we may lose the long range strategic necessity of having control of those resources in our hands, either for world use, or for people over the world, or most effective use in the North American economic picture.

In these remarks of the minister which I have quoted, as I said at the start, he appears to have a true and complete grasp of the situation. The problem is recognized but then, Mr. Chairman, we come to the question of a solution. In the remarks of the minister, and in the further discussion that took place at meetings of the committee, I am afraid the only indication of a solution offered by this government was that the taxpayers of this country should put up the money to open up this country, and then we should turn it

over to the same people described in the minister's remarks who ravished the resources of the country to the south. Is that a solution? In the process of the depletion of the resources of the United States in the last number of years, at least these people developed the country themselves. These people who made the mistakes that the minister pointed out so well, mistakes that we cannot allow to happen in this country, will be the ones who will develop these resources here. According to the minister's plan we are going to develop the country, open it up, and hand it over to them on a silver platter with no curbs or checks whatever to prevent them doing the same thing as we have seen them do to the south of us.

I refer to the remarks of the minister on page 19:

And if we, in our planning can put certain facts and figures before the people of Canada either in the form of energy figures, the willingness to build roads, or railways, or sea routes, or water routes, or air routes, then we are providing for these capital goods within the function of government—power, communication and transportation—to allow private enterprise to go in and develop these resources.

I ask you, Mr. Chairman, is that a solution? This government has done an excellent job on facing up to what the problems are, but what is the solution? This vision of this northern development, as outlined by the minister so well and so enthusiastically to this committee, could be, if properly handled, the greatest boon that this country has ever seen. The proper precautions should be taken to prohibit the same thing happening that he pointed out had happened in the country to the south of us. If, on the other hand, the taxpayers of Canada are going to have to put up the money to open up this country and hand it over to the same people to do the same thing as they did in the country to the south, then I am afraid I will have to say that would be the biggest sellout that this country has ever seen.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): I do not want to enter into a debate of this kind on the relative merits of private enterprise and socialism. However, I think the hon. member for Timmins has been very kind to me and I think he would appreciate it if I just say one word that I think would add a little bit to his understanding of what I said in the committee. I made it very clear that I considered it to be the responsibility of government to provide those capital goods such as railroads and power which are the type of things that seem to fall under the category of things that should be provided by the government. But I also made it equally clear that any time we open up any country and any successful operation developed that we