

Having in mind what has been done by the government in a critical period of war—I have in mind a visit I made this week to one of the prize babies of the Minister of Munitions and Supply at Sarnia—and remembering how the minister can boast of what has been done with public funds in connection with publicly owned corporations, I see no particular reason why the government could not take the risks involved in the drilling of wells, even if they should be dry wells. Imperial Oil or any other company must get from the Canadian people the funds they intend to use in this development. I believe that if we knew the very large amounts of money that bakers, tinsmiths and farmers in Ontario and Quebec have lost during the last twenty-five years in wildcat oil developments, we would find that the experimental work has been very costly. Having made such very large expenditures in the past, however, I should think it would be government policy now to determine that the government should take the cream as well as the skim-milk. I believe it would be a great calamity if in the post-war period we should have half a dozen companies planning to build plants such as the one at Sarnia, when one plant of that size undoubtedly will be able to produce all the rubber we are likely to use, with something over for export. Similarly I believe the development of our oil resources should be carried on as part of a national policy to produce all the oil available in Canada to keep the wheels of industry turning and to export the surplus to other, less fortunate countries, if that is possible. I think at this stage the minister might make some statement indicating that the people of Canada will have a chance to recoup the large expenditures that have been made in the past in connection with the development of the northern country.

Mr. GRAYDON: I have said nothing in this debate so far, and I rise at this time only to say a word in support of some of those who have taken part in this discussion. I think anyone who has studied the possibilities of that northern territory must range himself in support of a larger, more comprehensive scheme for its development. In the years to come I am sure this area of such potential wealth will come to be regarded as one of the most important parts of this country, and I wish to support much that has been said by those who preceded me, particularly the hon. member for Vancouver South, who suggested that we should take advantage of the experiments and the experience of our neighbours across Bering strait,

the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In replying to the suggestion that we should take advantage of the valuable experience of Russia I thought the minister's answer was not perhaps as comprehensive as it might have been. I think we might very well take advantage of the experiences of other countries in developing areas whose climate and other characteristics are similar to those of the northwest part of our dominion. So that in these very few words I should like to identify myself with the suggestion that has been offered in that regard, and I hope the minister will accept in a kindly way the advice that has come from this side of the house during this debate, which I think has been constructive and to the benefit of the Canadian people. I should like to see the government adopt a forthright, vigorous and well considered policy for the development of the Northwest Territories, so that in the years to come this will become one of our richest and best developed districts.

Mr. CRERAR: Some useful, constructive suggestions have been advanced during the course of the discussion. I believe my department is fully aware of the importance of taking advantage of everything that can be learned of what is being done in Russia. In my opinion the Department of Mines and Resources and indeed the dominion are very fortunate in having as deputy minister Doctor Camsell, whose knowledge of the whole north country is probably greater than that of any other Canadian. I would mention to the leader of the opposition that the Siberian or arctic region of Russia differs substantially from the arctic region of Canada. Our great northern area is largely found within what is known as the pre-Cambrian belt of rocks, which extends from Labrador, swinging around south of Hudson bay down as far as Port Arthur, and then in a northwesterly direction up to Great Bear lake, where the radium mines are, and on beyond the arctic. Therefore the development we may expect in a great part of our north country will be mineral development. I understand that conditions in Russia are somewhat different. Climatic conditions, I understand, are not quite as severe as they are in Canada, and they have timber and other resources.

Mr. GREEN: The article I read last evening said that their climate was worse than ours.

Mr. CRERAR: I know, for instance, that navigation is open every summer from Archangel, in the northwestern corner of Russia, around through to Bering strait. In Canada that is not possible. Ships have made the journey from Hudson bay to Bering strait,