

Mr. PACK: Well, we are planning in this case to sort of walk before we run. We are putting the instalation in and hope to get it in operation by May of this year. And as we stand our staff can take care of the immediate problem. I think it will be a natural consequence. We will see other opportunities and utilize them to the full extent. I cannot give a complete answer until we have had an opportunity to review it.

Mr. COATES: Am I right in assuming it is quite a difficult operation to change over from the present system to the I.B.M. system?

Mr. PACK: I guess it is difficult but we think we have the answers to it. Perhaps when we get into it in more detail we may find it is a little more difficult than we anticipated, but at the movement we believe we have the answer to the conversion.

Mr. COATES: I would like to commend the minister in regard to this work.

The CHAIRMAN: How much I.B.M. equipment do you intend to buy?

Mr. PACK: We will not be buying anything as far as I am aware at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in the estimates.

Mr. PACK: We are planning to rent it. As far as I am aware today, we do not plan to purchase any.

Mr. COATES: Does I.B.M. sell this equipment?

Mr. PACK: I understand within the past week a letter has come in from I.B.M. offering to sell any equipment which is presently located in departmental units. The letter came in only a day or so ago and we have not had a chance to evaluate the economics.

Mr. HARDIE: I would like to ask the minister a question. Since the minister's appointment to the portfolio he now holds he has had ample time to inspect the workings of his department. I wonder if he could tell us whether or not he has found in his department any indication of waste or extravagance.

Mr. COMTOIS: No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

Mr. DUMAS: It might interest the committee to hear from the minister whether he has visited most of the mining camps in Canada since his appointment as minister. My reason for asking is not to talk about trips. I do not mean to object to any trips of this kind.

On the contrary, I think that the minister should make it a point to visit all the mining camps in Canada if he can possibly do so, of course; and I think it would be interesting to know to what extent the minister has been able to do this.

Mr. COMTOIS: Let me tell you frankly that since I have been appointed minister I have not had much time to travel. Anyway, I have done my best. I am very anxious to visit the campsites, mining sites, and mining towns.

Last fall I went to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and I visited the coal mines there in Cape Breton and some other mines too, such as the salt mines in the maritimes.

After that I went to Newfoundland and I visited the Wabana (Bell Island). I might say that one of the most interesting experiences I had was my visit to the Abitibi district where I met Mr. Dumas and some other mining people. I found my trip very interesting. It was an experience to me to visit the gold mines and copper mines in his district.

Before that I should mention that I had an opportunity to go to Thomson lake on the occasion of the operation "last spike" on the invitation of Inco—that is, the International Nickel company.