

Supply—Northern Affairs

Mr. Pickersgill: I think the item refers to the unmarried sister and that Your Honour overlooked it inadvertently.

Mr. Speaker: All I can say is that this dependent of the late Colonel Baker is still living at an advanced age and is receiving the benefit which parliament first voted in 1918.

Mr. Regier: The reason I asked is that there have been increases in pensions, awards and incomes for almost everyone in the country. I know that this is only one of a number of such pensions found here and there throughout the departments but I wonder whether the government has ever given any attention to the possibility of allowing these people a reasonable increase to compensate for inflation.

Mr. Speaker: I do not know the circumstances of the lady in question but I will take the hon. member's suggestion under consideration and will perhaps be able to give more information next year.

Item agreed to.

The Deputy Chairman: That completes the estimates under legislation.

Mr. Speaker: May I thank hon. members for their consideration and also for what they have said about the staff of the legislative branch who are unable to speak for themselves and I am sure will appreciate the kind things that have been said about their services.

The Deputy Chairman: The committee will now take up the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS AND
NATIONAL RESOURCES

266. Departmental administration, \$731,410.

Mr. Pickersgill: Is the minister not going to make a statement?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): I am waiting for my staff to arrive.

Mr. Howard: We just wanted to make sure that the minister's staff got here. We know that the minister is itching to get to his feet to make a comprehensive statement.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Mr. Chairman, the estimates of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources were considered by the standing committee on mines, forests and waters at 14 meetings extending over a period of 25 to 28 hours. The minutes of proceedings and evidence of the standing committee are extensive. I think those members who attended the committee meetings will realize that a great deal of

information was advanced which I hope was of value to them. Then, on the supply motion some two weeks ago I spoke at some length on the principles behind the development program in so far as the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources is affected.

At this time I should like to pay my respects and express my gratitude to the members of the committee which met so many times. I might tell hon. members that the average lost time due to late arrival was only five minutes. I think that is remarkable in view of the fact that out of a committee of 35 we had an attendance that varied between 18 and 25 and many days the committee met at 9 o'clock in the morning, including Mondays. At this time members of the committee of supply have a right to ask any questions they like, and I am sure the department will be very happy to provide any information we can that will be of assistance in helping members to pass these estimates.

Mr. Hardie: Mr. Chairman, although the committee on mines, forests and waters did study the estimates of this department, we expected that the minister would make a far more comprehensive statement for the benefit of other members of the house than he made in the short time he was on his feet. There were a great number of questions that were not asked in the committee, and the reason I submit they were not asked is that it was felt, I am sure by most hon. members of the committee, that there was little information supplied in connection with the Northwest Territories administration and lands branch. As a matter of fact, there was a motion moved in the committee that we pass all the items. At that time I said, knowing full well that the committee was going to pass this motion, that I would ask the questions I had in mind when the estimates reached the House of Commons.

Of course, we heard a great deal in that committee from the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources concerning the vision of the north; the inventory of our resources in Canada; the problem of transportation, and other subjects relating to the material development of the north. I do not intend, at this particular time, to spend too much time on this material development because I have before me evidence relating to the human development of the Northwest Territories. I bring to the attention of this house today a very sad picture, a picture that dims that great vision of the minister and the government which was proclaimed during the last election campaign and since. The minister has stated inside this house, in committee and outside this house, the great

[Mr. Speaker.]