

Supply—Indian Affairs

responsible for bringing forward such a positive and forward looking national wildlife policy including the duck stamp program and the pothole preservation program. It seems so simple on the surface, yet it has already demonstrated it is playing a major role in preserving our migratory water fowl. I should like to pay tribute to the Audubon people and the National Wildlife Federation who have done an amazing job with limited funds in educating the people of Canada along the lines of conservationist philosophy. I should like to invite all hon. members of the house to become members of the association. By paying an annual fee of \$5 or \$6, as I recall it, they can become members and lend their support. This is the sort of assistance which makes it possible for these groups to carry on their work.

• (12:40 p.m.)

Then there are the private conservationists in the field, such as the Jack Miner sanctuary which inspired the annual celebration of Canada's wildlife week. Another conservationist and naturalist who is becoming increasingly well known throughout Canada and the world is Mr. Al Oeming, of the Edmonton game farm. I suppose Mr. Oeming is one of the world's outstanding naturalists. Actually he is a practical naturalist because he is conducting an experimental program demonstrating that amazing things can be done, even in a rigorous climate such as that which exists in and around the city of Edmonton, in the preservation of many of our wildlife species.

In connection with the current program under way to assist in the preservation of the whooping crane in a domestic habitat, I should like to ask the minister whether any of our Canadian wildlife authorities are involved in this experiment. A question was asked about this in the house the other day, I believe by the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona, but unfortunately the minister was not able to give a reply. However, I hope Canadian naturalists of the calibre of Mr. Oeming are also involved in preserving the whooping crane. It is not quite as Canadian as the Canada goose, but it does spend a good part of the season in Wood Buffalo national park. I hope we will give Canadians an opportunity to participate in this interesting conservation program.

I am going to say a few words about Indian affairs. As the minister indicated, the past record should be forgotten because it is not a very happy one. It is presented for all of us to

see if we visit the Indian pavilion at Expo, which is having a beneficial shock effect on millions of people who are visiting this tremendous exposition. However, recently I think we have more cause to be proud of ourselves; I certainly agree with the minister in this respect. I think this began in 1960 when we finally recognized that Indians were citizens and gave them the vote.

I know it is fine to be altruistic and say that the interest that has been aroused in the problems of our first Canadians has intensified in this house during recent years. I can remember, and I am sure the hon. member for Kootenay West can remember, when there was very little discussion of Indian affairs in this chamber. Now there is considerable interest. I think this is partly because Indian citizens are now voting Canadians, and we have to be concerned about their welfare whether we like it or not.

The major breakthrough has been in the field of education. I think Hon. Ellen Fairclough during her ministry established the precedents in this regard which are now bearing fruit. She was one of the first ministers to visit almost every reservation across Canada, and her program of integrating Indian children into the regular community schools has had wonderfully beneficial effects.

I should like to inform hon. members—I am sure the hon. member for Portage-Neepawa would do so were he here—that there will be an excellent Indian high school choir singing at Expo in July, though I do not know the specific dates. I think this choir is the only one of its kind in Canada, and consists of high school youngsters from the Portage la Prairie school. I have heard them sing and they do an excellent job. I would say they would compare favourably with choirs of many other ethnic groups in Canada, and I trust they too will have an opportunity to perform on parliament hill.

I do not want to trespass further on the time of the committee at this stage other than to say, in summing up these remarks, that as in the case with parks, where up to the present time only pronouncements have been made, the same might be said about northern affairs generally. I heartily agree with the minister of northern development when he talks about the tremendous upsurge in the north; the Registrar General nodded across to me and said "You agree with that, of course". Certainly I agree with it, because it was a policy and a program that was born in spite of the resistance of our friends of the Liberal party who voted against the Pine Point railway and

[Mr. Dinsdale.]