

Supply—Northern Affairs

other and that is why we did not hear about Arizona Charlie's joint last year when we were dealing with the estimates.

I wanted to ask him some further questions on this. I appreciate the information that is on page 852 of *Hansard*, but my questions were generated by a quite interesting article written by Pierre Berton in the Toronto *Star* of February 5. The minister may have seen it. I suppose Mr. Berton has a bit of a professional interest in the Yukon since he has been involved, I think, in a television series and has published a very entertaining book on the Yukon. He says a number of things in this article upon which I think the minister should comment just to set the record straight. This is apart from the questions asked by the hon. member for Welland, which I think concentrated on the point as to why the minister was so reticent last year and what are the plans for this year. Here are some of the points I should like to put to the minister. Mr. Berton says:

The more I think about this project, the more insane it sounds. But that is exactly why it has sparked so much interest. It is so wacky, so unlikely, so off-beat, that everybody wants to go.

This article goes on:

Sedentary types who normally wouldn't be caught farther afield than the Four Seasons motel are now coming up to me and saying, fiercely: "I've just got to go!"

Of course where they are going is up to the Yukon. Apparently an entire Broadway company is going up there to put on a new musical that is, I gather, an adaptation of the famous Ben Jonson play about gold and greed called *Volpone*. Again, this is such an imaginative thing that I wonder why the minister has been so discreet and reticent about it. How often does a Broadway musical come to Canada and, of all places, Dawson City in 1962? Why this mystery; why this cloister that has been placed around it by the government? It seems out of keeping with the past behaviour of this government. I have never known such modesty and at the same time such imagination, because Mr. Berton goes on to say:

Of course, all this is tentative, Broadway musicals being what they are. But contracts have been signed and the book is being written. I'd say there is at least a two to one chance of pulling it off.

So the odds are pretty good. He goes on:

I hope so because the department of northern affairs has spent something like \$200,000 completely restoring Arizona Charlie's famous Palace Grand dance hall just for the occasion.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether the hon. gentleman would permit me to ask him a question?

Mr. Fisher: Yes.

[Mr. Fisher.]

Mr. Pickersgill: Would he interpret this as free enterprise or socialized entertainment?

Mr. Fisher: I like to draw my own moral at the end of my remarks. If the hon. member will wait I will try to do that. I did want to go on to this—

Mr. Benidickson: The same price to everybody.

Mr. Fisher: Mr. Berton also says:

This is probably more than Charlie spent on it, since he built it from the remains of two steam-boats.

Was the Minister of Public Works consulted in this business? It seems to me that if this is a complete rebuilding job—I understand there are a lot of old steamboats up around that area—knowing the vigilance of the Minister of Public Works, this seems an ideal project for him. Anyway, Mr. Berton goes on:

The department's sleuths have been combing archives and writing old vaudevillians in order to reproduce the decor exactly as it was when the dance hall was built in the spring of 1899. The exterior was completed and the building closed in before the cold weather started last fall and the interior decorators are now at work on the final touches. The restoration of other buildings will depend on private funds which so far have been slow in coming in.

I think we need to ask the minister what assistance he has been giving in bringing in private funds. I gather that the government has accepted the responsibility of building up Arizona Charlie's place but the rest is going to be filled in by private enterprise. This leads me to the point that the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate mentioned. I can look at the roads program and all the other parts of the vision of the north, and always the call is that the government shall go in and lay the ground work and the basis for private enterprise. I want to ask the minister, is this project consistent in the same way, and is it also a constructive part of the vision? It seems to me it would be worth while knowing that.

Further on Mr. Berton gives a résumé of what is going to be included in the tour. He sets out the Gold Nugget tour for the first, second and third days. I was just stunned, again, at the reticence in this. I cannot find mention of a single political speech in here. I want to ask the minister, does he mean to say that after an expenditure of some 200,000 bucks on a place like this there is not going to be a politician there to open it or at least make a few remarks?

Mr. Pickersgill: It will be the first opening the Prime Minister has missed.