

been highly successful, that it is very economical and leaves practically no dust. A report in that connection would be welcomed, with some explanation as to the particular variety of coal best suited to be used in that way and so on. That would encourage its use in British Columbia and other places.

Mr. GORDON: The tests along the lines indicated by the hon. member were made by the Department of Mines at the request of the British Columbia government, but as I said a moment ago the reports are entirely too technical for me. However, the reports are in the hands of the government of British Columbia for transmission to the companies concerned, and in quite a number of instances the reports were very satisfactory, though in some other cases they were not.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: Has any further progress been made in connection with the commercial abstraction of petroleum from the oil shales in northern Alberta, where there are tremendous deposits? This matter has been under examination and experimentation for several years.

Mr. GORDON: I am told an investigation was made into the bituminous sands along the line suggested by my hon. friend, and perhaps he may be confusing the two matters.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I am not speaking of the tar sands but of the oil shales—the petroleum exposure in the oil shales.

Mr. GORDON: I am told that no investigation has been made.

Mr. HEENAN: In connection with the reported find of radium in the northwest territories, I would impress upon the minister once more the importance of ensuring that the control of these deposits shall remain in Canada. I do not suggest that there has been any indifference or neglect on the part of the government, but it would be indeed a serious situation if, because they were not in a position to carry on the development of this discovery through lack of funds or of assistance from the government, those who are engaged in this work were obliged to seek outside investment, thereby allowing aliens to obtain control of such important deposits. I understand that the Belgian government, when radium was discovered in that country, at once undertook to assist in the development of it as well as financially. This is such a precious metal, and it is so important from the point of view of the sick, that it seems to me we should make every effort to retain in Canada

[Mr. Neill.]

the control of the find which has been made. This is highly important in the interests of our hospitals and of Canadian citizens generally.

Mr. GORDON: Radioactive ores have been found in Canada in a number of places and certain developments have been carried out, in Ontario particularly, and in the northwest territories. The discovery of pitchblends, to which undoubtedly the hon. member refers, was made by prospectors in the northwest territories at Echo bay, after a great many years of unfruitful prospecting. I do not think the hon. gentleman suggests that the fruits of the labour of these prospectors should be taken from them. They are the ones who have discovered the radioactive ores and they are now carrying on their development. The mines branch have analyzed these ores and are watching the development out there with a great deal of interest, and I can assure the committee that if radioactive ores in commercial tonnages are found, of sufficient richness to justify their development, the necessary and proper steps will be taken to safeguard the interests of the Canadian people, at the same time, of course, not dealing unfairly or unjustly with those who have carried on the work of prospecting for so many years.

Mr. COWAN (Port Arthur-Thunder Bay): While we are discussing the vote for the investigation of mineral resources, I would point out to the minister the desirability, from the Canadian standpoint, of developing the iron ore resources of northern Ontario. To my knowledge, some fifteen years ago we had in Canada fifteen or twenty blast furnaces using, to a large extent, Canadian ores. To-day we have, I believe, only three, and during the last year not an ounce of Canadian ore was used in any one of these furnaces. To-day these furnaces import from the United States all the ore which they are using. Last year the importations amounted to 1,000,000 tons of American ore. That cost the Canadian furnaces and the Canadian people the sum of \$90,000,000, for that was the value of the ore delivered to the furnaces in Canada. That creates in the first place a very unfavourable balance of trade, because these ores have to be paid for with Canadian money. So much for that side of the picture. The other side of the picture is the fact that in northern Ontario and in other districts in Canada we have unlimited deposits of iron ore. It is true they are not of the same consistency as those found in the American states, but by a method of beneficiation it is felt that they