

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

the committee that dealt with the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, and first of all I should like to say what a pleasure it was to work with that committee. As was pointed out by the minister, the attendance of members showed the interest that they had in the committee. I should also like to remark at this time on the enthusiasm for his department that is so apparent in the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. He appears to be completely dedicated and certainly seems to have really tied into his job in an endeavour to do it to the best of his ability. In fact, I think it became quite obvious to various members of the committee that the minister was indeed the creator of the vision that we have heard so much about in the last few months. I believe we can give him full marks for being the one who sold it to the Prime Minister who propounded it across the country with such vigour and, indeed, such success.

However, during the quite lengthy statement that the minister made at the first meeting of the standing committee we also saw something else, that apparently the minister and the department have a very clear view of the problems facing the department with respect to northern development. It was quite apparent from his statement, and I intend to make several references to it, that they recognize just what is the big and important problem that we face. But, of course, to recognize a problem is not to find a solution and I must say that where I have to differ with the minister and the government is with respect to the solution they propose with regard to northern development. To illustrate what I have said about the minister recognizing the problems, I should like to refer to page 11 of the minutes of proceedings and evidence of the standing committee on mines, forests and waters where I find the following in the minister's statement:

To be very blunt about it, if you go back to the experience of the second world war you will find that the American government was very much concerned about the rapid depletion of their strategic resources and there was set up a presidential committee in that country to examine into this matter. This committee reported in 1952 and their report is known as the Paley report. The Paley report says in plain English that the resources of the United States of America are not unlimited and that, at the present time, they are in a deficit position so far as total resources are concerned to maintain their industrial economy. Naturally they have to seek out reserves both of energy and mineral resources in every land.

That was a very clear recognition of the fact that our neighbours to the south, in the very short period of approximately 50 years, will

see the end of their vast natural resources. We go to the next page, where the minister points out, and I quote:

—we are the nation on the northern half of this continent and we want to make certain that the interests, not only of the present generation, are protected, but that the interests of generations unborn will also be preserved.

Certainly, Mr. Chairman, that is one of the very important and very grave responsibilities which this government has today. We have to think not only of ourselves, but we have to think, as has not been done unfortunately in the past, of generations that will come after us. The minister continues:

—so that we can work out an attack on this problem of building a nation of from 50 millions to 100 millions of people based on a concept which I think I would like to call the conservation concept.

There, of course, is the key to the whole situation. In this country we have to embark on a program of conservation such as this North American continent, unfortunately, has not seen in the past. He goes on:

If I might interrupt my thoughts for a moment to suggest that if the American people had to relive the nineteenth century over again knowing what they now know about their economic history, they would not have had to wait until the turn of the nineteenth century to start these great conservation methods that their nation has now embarked upon.

In other words if they, in the United States, had realized, as we have the opportunity of realizing today, what the situation was they would not be locking the door after the horse had been stolen but would have, as we have a chance to do, taken some precautions before the theft took place. I continue to quote from the minister's remarks:

We in Canada, whether because an act of grace, or because of our geographical location, or simply as a result of inertia, have not had our resources depleted so widely as the American resources have been depleted, without plan.

Now, there is a strange statement to come from a Conservative cabinet minister. Generally we look for a statement of that nature from the so-called planning socialists. I should like to compliment the minister once more on his grasp of the situation. He said:

We may have, either by the grace of God, or by our own inertia, been saved from having misused our resources.

Certainly there again we find a recognition of what is happening and what we have seen happening south of us over the last number of years. Then, the minister said:

I would like to go back to our own country. I do think that if the people who now live in the central provinces, particularly in Ontario, had to relive the last 100 years, knowing now what they knew then, great changes would be made in the planning and use of resources. There is no question of attaching blame for this at all. It is simply that