

about which the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. MacNicol) gave us some useful information.

The mineral possibilities of Canada, not only with regard to iron but with regard to other metals, is perhaps little more than scratched, if I may use that term. There was a time about forty years ago when it was thought that the precambrian shield contained no minerals, but we now know that we may reasonably expect to find minerals in this belt all the way from Labrador, around the southern end of Hudson bay and up to Great Bear lake in the Arctic region. Here and there mines are now operating profitably, not only in connection with the precious metals, gold and silver, but also in connection with the commercial metals such as nickel, copper and zinc. He would be a bold man indeed who would attempt to place any limit upon the possibilities of mineral development in this country.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Do we lack in Canada any of the metals essential to the manufacture of aeroplanes, tanks and motor cars?

Mr. CRERAR: I think we have them all, with the possible exception of chromium. We have zinc, copper, nickel, and we are now producing iron.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Is tin required in the construction of these armaments?

Mr. CRERAR: We have a little tin, not very much. Tin, I understand, does not enter extensively into the manufacture of automobiles and guns. It is a useful commodity in certain places, but not necessarily there.

Mr. MacNICOL: The minister mentioned chromium. We are producing chromium in northwestern Ontario, in the vicinity of a town the name of which has escaped my mind; I believe it is Collins. Is the mine not still in operation?

Mr. CRERAR: It is quite true that we have, I believe at the Soo, a chromium reduction plant.

Mr. MacNICOL: But the ore comes from northwestern Ontario?

Mr. CRERAR: I am informed that most of it now comes from outside Canada.

Mr. MacNICOL: A few years ago the government granted facilities—

Mr. CRERAR: Quite true.

Mr. MacNICOL: —to construct a road into Collins, I believe it was, in northwestern Ontario. Perhaps the chromium mine has not developed as it was anticipated it would.

Mr. CRERAR: That is quite true. As I recall, \$8,000 or \$10,000 was spent on getting a road into a deposit somewhere north of Port Arthur, I believe.

Mr. MacNICOL: Yes. Northwest.

Mr. CRERAR: But the deposit did not prove to be a very large one. While considerable ore was taken to the Soo, the plant there, I am informed, depends now very largely, if not altogether, upon sources of supply outside Canada.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Just before we conclude, I believe the hon. member for Davenport held up, for the committee to see, a piece of iron ore. He sent me a little note which I think is good enough to put on *Hansard*. It is this:

Sample of hematite ore from Steep Rock mines, northwestern Ontario; 65 per cent of iron and millions of tons in sight.

I wish to make just a short comment which seems to me valuable. The minister will have heard many times the statement, uttered and reiterated by leaders of thought to-day, that the things which matter in our war effort are materials and men. Where a thing is physically possible it can be made financially possible, and when he points out that the iron ore deposits are a thousand miles away from coal, it is well that we realize in this committee at this present time that, if the coal is there, if the iron deposits can be made accessible to the railroads, then the coal can be transported to the iron deposits and the iron can be made. If the government of the day neglects to take cognizance of that fact, and as a result, through lack of iron, Britain should be in danger of losing the war, the government of the day will never be forgiven—not in centuries to come.

Item agreed to.

159. Indian affairs branch. Branch administration, \$54,800.

Mr. MacNICOL: What I have to say will relate to the items from 159 to 168. I shall be brief; I want, as much as anybody else, to see the end of this part of the session.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall we take together items 159 to 168?

Mr. MacNICOL: They all pertain to Indians.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the committee that we shall take these items together?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Agreed.

160. Indian agencies, \$654,893.

161. Administration, \$40,365.