

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

Frobisher bay. Perhaps the minister will comment on this report. It certainly is, and I say this is not in any critical sense, a rather dazzling vision of the immediate future.

There was another aspect of the implementation of this vision of northern development about which the minister talked a good deal during the election, and that was the railroad to Great Slave lake. When this matter was mentioned in another debate the minister said that while perhaps no great progress has been made since last spring, under the previous administration nothing whatever had been done. I believe there is a statement in *Hansard* in which he rather suggested we had done nothing. So far as doing nothing is concerned, I suggest to the minister that the survey for this very important railroad was begun by the previous government. Undoubtedly this survey was continued by the present government, but if it has been completed we have not yet heard of that in this house.

On the other hand, we have heard that the government does not intend to proceed with this matter at the present session, and indeed that the government has not yet made up its mind where the railway will go. If the government has not been able to take that kind of decision after the survey has presumably been completed, I do not know why they should criticize us for not having done more while the survey was continuing. It would have been very stupid for the previous government to have taken any final decision on this matter, as to the route or any other detailed aspects, until the survey had been completed.

Perhaps the minister will have something to say about both the survey and the route, because when he was speaking in Edmonton on February 1 he was pretty definite in what he said. Speaking of the Great Slave lake railway, he said it could be built by 1961, and that the Canadian National, Canadian Pacific and the government were working at high speed to finalize the economics of the project. We would like some information as to the finalization of this particular project.

During those days the minister also had some other exciting things to say about the development of the north. Perhaps he will be able to elaborate on some of these statements during this discussion. According to the *Montreal Star* of April 10 the minister declared that the rush was on in the northland. The report states:

Northern Affairs Minister Alvin Hamilton, in an interview on the eve of his departure today for an international conference in Geneva, said:

"It is an attack on all fronts. The rush to the north is on."

[Mr. Pearson.]

Perhaps we can get some details in regard to that rush since that statement was made or before the statement was made. This report says, and I quote again:

Mr. Hamilton said that since the Diefenbaker Winnipeg speech—

That was the speech beginning the Prime Minister's election campaign.

—his department had received about 1,000 letters—800 more than during the same period last year—asking how to get jobs in the north.

Perhaps this statement has a bearing on the statement that the rush to the north is on. Then, according to the press, the minister made this very interesting additional observation:

American applicants had outnumbered Canadians by three to one.

Presumably this means that 300 or 400 Canadian letters had been received asking how to get jobs in the north. In that connection it would be useful to the committee and interesting, I think, if the minister could give us some indication of what has happened in regard to jobs for northern development since these statements were made during the election campaign.

Then on May 6—and I found this of particular interest—according to the press the minister had this to say about another aspect of our Arctic development:

Northern Affairs Minister Alvin Hamilton has suggested a non-military type of Arctic inspection. His idea: an exchange of visits with Soviet Russia on northern development techniques.

This matter was raised, I think, some weeks ago in the house and the minister indicated that it might be a good idea to have this kind of exchange. Perhaps it would be a good idea. I wonder whether he has made any progress in his plans for this kind of visit, because it is obviously true that we can learn a great deal from the Russians in regard to Arctic development. It is true that they have made much greater progress than we have in that regard, and that is quite natural. For one thing, they have been engaged in Arctic activity much longer than we have, and they have perhaps appreciated its importance both strategically and commercially for a much longer time than we have. This is due also no doubt in part to the fact that they have a much larger population than we have, and can direct whatever portion of that population they wish to live and work in the Arctic.

Our development of the Arctic, which is going to be just as important to us as the development of the Russian Arctic to them, has to be done under a system which does not dragoon Canadians into any part of the country, and that is bound to be, in the short run at least, a handicap. Nevertheless, even keeping in mind the differences in the