

sponsibility of the commissioner in ordering these arrests. I do not think a man who has the responsibility of having brought about these arrests should be allowed to remain at the head of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Inquiries should also be made into the actions of the assistant commissioner in attempting to serve the warrants in the way he did.

Just one other word. To-morrow will be the King's birthday and very often in the old days that was made an occasion for clemency. I have tried to outline some of what I regard as the official blunders that led up to this tragedy. The victims of those blunders are still in gaol. Although the officials exceeded their authority and blundered, although they may have lost their heads at the time, they are still in charge, but the poor victims are in gaol. I ask the minister to consider seriously the possibility of granting clemency to these men and may I include others who are serving sentences to-day because of acts committed in riots or other troubles connected with industrial disputes.

I was delighted with the high position taken the other day by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) and other supporters of the government in supporting the repeal of section 98 of the criminal code. I am not so much interested in trying to place the blame here or there. The trouble is we have not paid sufficient attention to the underlying causes; in future we should try to remedy the causes before adopting repressive measures. We blame the trekking unemployed but I believe that if the police had acted as they did with a group of university students the results would have been similar. These results did not come about because of anything inherently wrong with these men; it was because of the conditions in which they found themselves. Let me point out that the leaders are not among those now in gaol, the charges against them having been subsequently withdrawn.

I felt that I could not let this session pass without calling attention to this very serious situation and making a plead for clemency. I suggest that we try to wipe out these blunders as far as is possible by a gesture of generosity towards those who have been the victims.

Mr. BENNETT: I have no right to speak again because it is all one motion, but when the appropriate estimate is reached I shall deal with this matter.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Perhaps it would be better to wait until this item is called.

[Mr. Woodsworth]

YUKON MINING CLAIMS

Mrs. MARTHA LOUISE BLACK (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, this is neither a grievance nor a protest; it is merely an explanation. During the last half hour of the evening of May 29 the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Ross) asked the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Crerar) if he knew of claims in the Yukon which had been staked, proved and abandoned but which were still closed to the public. The Minister of the Interior replied that the matter had not been brought to his attention. At the request of the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett), the matter was allowed to rest as the member for Yukon was not in her seat. Since that time I have made a painstaking study of this question.

In the very early days of the Yukon when it was part of the Northwest Territories, and possibly for two or three years after the Yukon territory had been created, there were many grave subversions of justice in connection with the administration of mining claims. Huge concessions of mining land were given to political favourites, especially when compared with the lands which were rightfully staked by the prospectors and miners. This prevented development because in some instances these lands lay idle and unworked for years. Miners were cheated out of their claims by the meanest of subterfuges, the falsifying of mining records. It was a common experience for a man who had staked a claim on a distant creek and who had given a description of his claim on his application to record, to be told to call at the office later. Then, when he did call later he would be informed that the claim had already been staked ahead of him. Men stood in line for days to reach the recorder's wicket, while the favoured ones used the side door. Similarly, at the post office the long customary wait was shortened by the usual palm crossing. When communication with the government at Ottawa became a matter of weeks instead of many months—it is now only a matter of days—conditions changed and for years past staking and recording in the Yukon have become the merest routine. The officials at any of the recording offices are ready and willing to help at any time.

I doubt very much if there are any mines in the condition suggested by the hon. member for Moose Jaw. When five or more are staking property 100 miles or more from a recorder's office, one of the party may be selected as an emergency recorder. Any person who has duly located a claim may obtain a grant thereof for from one to five years by paying in advance to the mining recorder the