

able to secure the necessary capital to embark on this somewhat expensive prospecting.

Mr. BUREAU: You allow him to consolidate the smaller claims?

Mr. THOMPSON (Yukon): Yes.  
Section agreed to.

On section 2—Lease to prospect for gold, application and evidence required, etc.

Mr. BUREAU: Is the size of a discovery claim 23 acres?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Three times the ordinary size.

Mr. THOMPSON (Yukon): 1,500 feet along a creek.

Mr. BUREAU: I see that when an application is made for a lease the Gold Commissioner of the Yukon shall satisfy himself that the applicant has the means to carry on the necessary prospecting. Did that provision exist under the old law?

Mr. THOMPSON (Yukon): No. Under the present law a man may stake a claim 500 feet long, or if he discovers a new creek he may stake a discovery claim 1,500 feet long. The Gold Commissioner must satisfy himself that the people who apply for these leases are able to carry out the conditions so that the ground will be prospected, the underlying principle being that ground now idle may not be tied up.

Mr. BUREAU: But, on the other hand, power is left absolutely in the hands of the Gold Commissioner to determine whether or not leases shall be granted to any applicants. He is the sole judge and may refuse an applicant a lease by merely stating that the applicant has not furnished satisfactory evidence that he has the means to fulfil the conditions of the lease. Does not the minister and the member for the Yukon think that this is a rather absolute power to leave in the hands of one man, especially in a mining country?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The Gold Commissioner already has other powers just as wide as this power. There is no other way of administering the Act. The Gold Commissioner is too far away for any appeal powers to be exercised over him, and those directly interested, as represented in the Yukon Development League, are quite ready to submit to this provision. As the hon. member is aware, the Gold Commissioner acted for many years as Commissioner of the Yukon.

[Mr. Thompson.]

Mr. BUREAU: But like ourselves he will have to get out some day—he will die, poor fellow.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Then another man equally as good will be appointed as long as present conditions obtain.

Mr. BUREAU: I thought you were going to say "as long as the present Government continues." That is where I get suspicious!

Mr. MEIGHEN: I do not think any other method is possible, for we cannot maintain a court there for the purpose indicated; the Act has to be administered by one man only. As the hon. member knows, we reduced the officials there about two years ago, by more than half, I think.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR (Guysborough): In my province, at all events, a man who goes out to engage in prospecting requires nothing more than his loaf of bread, a powder horn and a pick; the best coal mines in the province have been discovered by men so equipped. I would not like to see an Act passed which would have the effect of shutting out the gold prospector. Why is it necessary to confine the application to men of wealth or means?

Mr. MEIGHEN: It does not confine the application to men of wealth; it simply provides that before a man can get a lease he must show he is able to do something on the ground. It would be bad policy to grant to any applicant a lease, thereby tying the territory up, if he has no means at all of utilizing that territory. When the Yukon was new and the mining was carried on under the old method, the prospector did not require any capital, because the gold was there and could be mined by that method. But these worked-over claims can be mined only by the use of these power drills. It is not we who compel the presence of capital; it is nature; consequently, to avoid tying up claims by those who cannot work them we simply say: Show us that you are able to work them, or show us that you have associated with you men who can work them, and that is sufficient.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: That seems to be a very good reason. But the prospector has to come back to the commissioner and show that he has done something during the year; it does not occur to me that it is necessary to impose this condition in the first year. Very often men who have not much means can discover a gold mine. A great deal, of course, depends upon the administration of the Act. If it is rigid, some worthy people may be altogether shut out