

Yukon Minerals Act

Another communication concerning the letter sent by the B.C. Chamber of Mines is as follows:

Received your letter regarding Bill C-187 and after reading it over discovered that a company such as ours cannot explore in the Yukon Territory.

It is unfortunate that the government chose to restrict entry of exploration capital. Our company will be doing mineral exploration throughout Canada, excluding the Yukon Territory.

Another reads:

The developments earlier this year and an extrapolation of further indications of restrictions have led to our decisions to cut back considerably on our initial 1970 budget. The recent blow of the Bill C-187 has now just appeared while we prepare our 1971 budget involving some heavy work commitments under options with Canadian companies.

You will understand that our outlook into our future in Canada is overshadowed with deep concern, as to what restrictions we have to expect next. If there are no signs of an end of the present trend, we may have to reconsider our willingness to invest large sums in Canada, and we may even have to change our mind completely and to dispatch Canada from the list of favourable countries for investments by our large group.

Another reads as follows:

Approximately three years ago, Mr. Chrétien toured Europe in order to stimulate European investment in mineral research and exploration in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. He put special emphasis on the potential of these countries and on the general political stability of Canada. Ever since, all measures taken by the federal government tend to completely modify the climate of the mining industry in Canada: new fiscal legislation, limitation of foreign capital in the Yukon. All these measures tend to discourage foreign companies to invest in the Canadian mining industry which adopts a nationalistic policy like South American and African countries.

With regard to the Yukon, the recent increase of the royalty was already an unfavourable factor and in my opinion not justified considering the high costs of prospecting and mineral exploration in this country. The provisions of Bill C-187 would force us to create new companies to work in the Yukon in order to have Canadian shareholders right from the stage of prospecting.

And so it goes. Another communication reads:

Should this bill be passed and all other factors being equal, I would say that, given two exploration situations of comparable promise in B.C. and the Yukon, we would probably pick the B.C. project over that in the Yukon.

Another reads:

I can see no reason to recommend to my company that we do exploration in the Yukon if Bill C-187 is passed. It does not seem fair that if we take the big gamble on the exploration we should then have to give half of any success out to others who did not also participate in the earlier, high-odds gamble of exploration.

The British Columbia and Yukon chambers of mines sent excerpts of 30 letters to the minister. The last of these perhaps sums up the whole matter:

With respect to Bill C-187, under the conditions imposed by the bill it would effectively shut-out any exploration work that we would have in mind for the Yukon.

That indeed sums it up. We have heard from the industry. How about labour? Next I wish to read a telegram sent to me last January 18, by Teamsters Union, Local 31, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. It reads:

[Mr. Nielsen.]

Teamsters Union wishes to register our objection to the proposed Yukon Minerals Act Bill C-187 because we believe it would be highly detrimental to the economy and future development of the Yukon Territory and its people. Our members are already feeling the effects of construction postponements due to the pending white paper on taxation and the passage of Bill C-187 would bring about large-scale unemployment to our members as well as economic hardship to every Yukoner connected with mining in the Yukon.

It is signed by Frank Bachmier, business representative. That opinion by labour could be repeated but I will not take up the time of the House in repeating it. I have received several such representations. I shall read one excerpt from a lengthy telegram I received from a company engaged in representation work for the mineral industry in the Yukon. The company, Archer, Cathro & Associates Ltd., is a small one. The telegram is dated February 8 and reads in part as follows:

During 1970 our firm managed mineral exploration programs in Yukon amounting to over seven hundred fifty thousand dollars in addition to a large involvement in casino project most of this money was attracted to Yukon entirely through our efforts and was spent there on goods and services this year our volume of work will likely drop by at least one third and will consist mainly of projects which were committed before first reading of Bill C-187 we now notice a strong reaction against Yukon by prospective clients and fear that we will be unable to find sufficient work in 1971 to maintain our Yukon base we have maintained our Whitehorse headquarters since 1966 and have concentrated our work in Yukon—

They go on to make critical comments about the bill. When the minister was in the Yukon, Jack Webster, the radio personality, asked him to comment on the unemployment predictions which I had made. The minister suggested in his reply that I should prove what I had said. I cite these examples and these telegrams, of which he is aware, as authentication of the statement I have made.

• (3:20 p.m.)

Once previously the Liberal government attempted to do what it is now attempting. At that time a Liberal member opposed the measure. The minister of the day was Mr. Lesage and the member in question was Aubrey Simmons. Some hon. members of the House remember the courageous stand Mr. Simmons took at that time. Although the government was stubborn in insisting on introducing amendments to the Yukon Quartz Mining Act which would have established the power with respect to making regulations for the people of the Yukon, that member was instrumental in having the bill withdrawn, or not proceeded with, after it had been read the first time and after some debate on second reading had taken place. I can do no better than refer hon. members to Mr. Simmons' speech, to be found in *Hansard* of May 25, 1955. The debate commenced at page 4097. The motion was put by Mr. Simmons, that the bill be not read the second time, seconded, I believe, by Mr. Green. When Mr. Herridge spoke in support of the stand taken by Mr. Simmons—I might say he was supported by members of the NDP on that stand—he said on May 25, 1955, as recorded at page 4113 of *Hansard*—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): We were CCF in those days.