

Yukon Minerals Act

Mr. Speaker: I now leave the Chair and the House will resume at two o'clock.

[English]

The House will resume its work at two o'clock.
At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. MacLean: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I might be permitted to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council to state what the business will be on Monday.

Mr. Jerome: Yes, Mr. Speaker. On Monday we propose to call as the first order of business the report stage of Bill C-182 concerning statutory instruments. If debate on that measure is completed, the second order of government business will be the report stage of Bill C-215 respecting the Textile and Clothing Board.

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YUKON MINERALS ACT**ADMINISTRATION, ACQUISITION AND RECORDING OF CLAIMS, ETC.**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Chrétien that Bill C-187, rejecting minerals in the Yukon Territory, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, before I open my remarks on Bill C-187, I wish to indicate to the House that I had the honour and privilege of being in the Yukon for the Sour Dough Rendez-vous last week. I enjoyed once more the warm hospitality of the people of the Yukon and I must say that this annual festival re-creates this so exciting period of the Klondike gold rush for all Yukon residents.

I was fortunate to be accompanied on this trip by a symbolic personality of Quebec City, Bonhomme Carnaval, who during these activities showed the people of the Yukon that the carnival spirit of their region was indeed very good, but certainly not better than that of Quebec. In fact, I think events such as this should be mentioned in the House, for they indicate that such exchanges between East and West and between South-east and North-west are most commendable. Therefore I would like to thank the people in Whitehorse and more especially the authorities for their warm hospitality.

Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure today of introducing in this House a piece of legislation which amounts to a

[Mr. Speaker.]

revision of the Yukon Quartz Mining Act which was passed by Parliament on July 23, 1924 and which governs the acquiring and managing of mining rights on Yukon hard rocks.

The act was written to a large extent along the same pattern as the regulation on franchising quartz mines on federal land in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, including the provisional district of the Yukon, and that regulation had been adopted by order in council dated March 21, 1898.

The 1924 act has been only slightly amended since then, the last instance dating back 18 years ago.

In recent years, newly-developed processes and techniques for mining research and exploration activities have been in use. Owing to this progress, it has become increasingly obvious that the present Yukon Quartz Mining Act is obsolete and an obstacle to the potential economic expansion of the Yukon territory.

Several sections of this act are obsolete and lack clarity. I think the existing legislation does not allow for adequate management of the mining rights on quartz nor does it promote through more suitable means the exploration and development of the Yukon's large mining resources.

The concession of rights for the development and operation of mining resources by the Crown no longer brings to the latter a reasonable financial return, especially if we compare it to royalties levied in other mining areas in Canada. The existing act does not provide for the application to mining operations of existing land use regulations for the protection of nature in the Yukon.

The proposed bill is therefore a complete review and up dating of the Yukon Quartz Mining Act which will give way, if this new bill is passed, to a new text entitled the Yukon Minerals Act.

The primary objective of this bill is implementation of long-overdue changes to legislation on purchase and operation of minerals in the Yukon. The bill not only provides for more efficient local management but also for some new measures to stimulate the mining industry which is already flourishing in the Yukon.

The following are some of the main changes made in the act.

First of all, the elimination of the limit set on the number of claims which can be staked by an individual, which was formerly eight claims within a radius of 10 miles.

Second, the possibility for companies habilitated to operate in the Yukon to stake claims by proxy.

Third, the possibility of using a mound of stone instead of wooden legal posts in areas where there are no trees.

Fourth, the possibility of selling, before the staking out of a claim, metallic tags to be fastened to legal posts at the time of the staking out;