

People who know most about this subject belong to a special branch of science called boreal biology. They tell us that special techniques and attitudes are necessary in the north. I am sure the Department of Northern Development has specialists in this field on its staff. What I am not so sure about is whether anyone listens to their advice. They might help write the press releases, handle the public relations, but are they listened to when the decisions are made? Why is the ecology of the north so sensitive? A brief review might be worth while. First, the low energy budget of northern ecosystems; for example, scars made by tracked vehicles are virtually permanent. Second, the factor of permafrost; once the insulation has been removed, the subsurface softens, contributing to the permanency of the scarring. Dr. Pruitt, who is an outstanding boreal biologist, has commented on this subject and I believe his observations are worthy of notice. He was called upon to assist the department in connection with these studies, but I am uncertain whether or not his recommendations were accepted.

Mr. Chrétien: Some, yes.

Mr. Rose: I am not sure that all the recommendations were accepted, particularly those which would ensure that the dangers about which we are talking would be avoided.

Mr. Chrétien: The hon. member saw over the weekend that there are two sides to a question.

Mr. Benjamin: Yes, but the mining companies' side always comes up.

Mr. Rose: Dr. Pruitt does not want development in the north to be stopped. He wants assurance that the north will remain as unspoiled as possible, consistent with reasonable development. He wants reasonable care to be taken. Writing in the CSRS newsletter, he says:

The regulations due to be presented are ecologically unsound and philosophically naïve... They will not stop the single resource concept, the one-resource concern of the federal government.

He goes on to make some suggestions. In his view, the proposed regulations would limit the multiple use of all resources. He specified some of the restrictions which should be imposed. For instance, tracked vehicles should not exceed a ground pressure of 70 pounds per square inch.

• (4:00 p.m.)

He also recommends the burning of all trash, or the burying of all trash, including oil barrels, of the unburnable type. He suggests that all exploration information be pooled in order that the results may be available to everyone without repeating exploration which would result in the digging of holes all over the Arctic. Regulations should require that all camps be equipped with incinerators for the burning of garbage. Dr. Pruitt would prohibit vehicle travel in streams, except by canoes or airboats. Camp operations would be prohibited in caribou fawning or rutting areas during certain times of the year and camps should be fenced. He refers to many other

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things and in general is very critical about the proposed regulations. He also suggests more and larger land management zones. The point should be made also that land management zones represent a very small fraction of the total land area of the north.

Dr. Pruitt concludes his CSRS newsletter article by saying:

Thus we see that the problem resolves itself into three parts: (a) the absolute necessity of having regulations and stipulations that ensure the survival of the entire ecosystem; in other words, regulations based on the hard facts of boreal ecology, not on economic expediency.

(b) The necessity of covering all the NWT and YT with regulations designed for each ecological zone; and

(c) the necessity of a performance bond to be posted for each operator or permittee.

A pretty strong case therefore has been made about the possible dangers of ecological damage. It should be emphasized too, that we are not against development, but rather development without proper regard for the possible consequences.

Now, let me refer to something a little more specific in relation to this bill. There are probably two main areas of contention. One area concerns commonlaw rights, rights of entry, restrictions on claim staking, protection and compensation for holders of surface rights who have been infringed upon by the mining industry, most of which are historically occupied by native people. The main point is the degree to which the mining industry has control over the public lands. Where can one not explore? You cannot explore in townsites, but how many townsites are there in the Yukon? You cannot explore in national parks in the Yukon. Where are the national parks in the Yukon?

Mr. Nielsen: Ask the minister.

Mr. Rose: You cannot explore in cemeteries, but everywhere else you can explore. These are not very restrictive exploration limits.

The second point of contention deals with regulations for the proper use of land once a claim has been entered. I think it is fair to say that the Territorial Land Act of 1952 did not cover well enough the area of protection and control of exploitation and development. The amendments in this bill refer to land use regulations which are still in draft form. I have not received any real assurance to the contrary. This is vital because a great deal of the environmental provisions for land use written into Bill C-187 are contingent upon land use regulations.

The bill of course represents an improvement over what we have had up until now, the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, but there is a great deal more which must be done. Land use regulations, in my opinion, will be formed in two parts. There will be general land use regulations concerning the whole, of the territorial lands and there will be rules for special zones to be set aside known as land management zones. As I understand it, the second part of the regulations in respect of land management zones will be more specific and effective. However, the point is that virtually none of the Yukon mineral