

Mr. Nielsen: I believe the hon. parliamentary secretary when she says that ordinary administrative structures control the acquisition of land by government employees in the north. You had better believe it. And they apply not only to government employees but to any other citizen in the north who wants to pursue agriculture as a way of life.

I can understand a certain amount of hesitation on the part of government structures which have been erected to protect all of us with respect to the disposition of our resources in the light of possible speculation. But where you have an individual who wants to invest several thousands of dollars in the bona fide acquisition of a piece of land, he should be allowed to purchase the land and develop it without direction from the government.

A few moments ago I referred to a constituent who was having difficulty in obtaining land for agricultural development. He went to the trouble of sending soil samples to Beaver Lodge, the federal government experimental farm in the Yukon, in order to have them analysed to prove that something could be grown. He received a favourable report and took it to the federal government officer in Whitehorse who is in charge of lands. It was placed on file there but he was told, "I am sorry, we do not accept soil analyses from our experimental farm. We go to the province of Alberta for them."

So he sent a sample out to the federal department of agriculture office in Alberta, and took that result in to the office in Whitehorse. He had been told that without soil samples he would have no hope of getting the land. He now had two favourable reports but was told, "I am sorry, you cannot get the land until you get your stock." Then he spent some \$10,000—farmers know more about these things—on what I am told was registered, pure bred Andalusian stock.

● (1510)

He went back to the authorities and said, "I have my soil samples and I have my stock. It cost me \$10,000—true, I had to sell my home to get it, but here it is. May I now have the land?" What do you suppose the reply was? He was told, "Well, we would love to give you land but, we are sorry, the minister last February announced that all applications for agricultural pursuits in the Yukon have been cancelled. We are sorry that you incurred these expenses in the past, but you will not be able to get the land."

That is just one small example of circumstances in the Yukon which have given rise to complaints like the one raised by my constituent. People up there are saying there will be violence in the Yukon before lands are handed back to the government. They have said, through organizations set up to convince others that agriculture is possible in the Yukon, that they will burn their barns and buildings before giving their land back to the government. I hope that, when they consider this legislation, departmental officials will take my remarks into consideration.

The parliamentary secretary made much of the fact that all sorts of multinational companies now are getting lands in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. That may be so, but the ordinary Canadian, the northerner who lives there, is not accorded the same kinds of favours which the

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government appears to be giving to multinational corporations acquiring lands in the north.

Let me comment on the parliamentary secretary's statement to the effect that employees are expected to make appropriate disclosure. I have some information for her. I wonder if she knows that government employees in the north have been told they must make full disclosure of land holdings and interests in lands which they hold, and of all other assets and holdings, on pain of dismissal if they refuse. That general directive has been given to federal government employees in the Yukon, and I have no reason to suspect that it does not apply to government employees in the Northwest Territories. They must list all assets; if they do not, they are told they are dismissed.

That was the sort of attitude adopted by Commissioner Hodgson, presumably with the acquiescence, if not with the instruction, of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Buchanan). The commissioner told employees in the service of the territorial government of the Northwest Territories that, when Mr. Justice Berger was holding commission hearings in Inuvik, they were not to talk, not to give evidence before the commission. That shows the government's attitude and how it treats its employees. It is no doggone wonder we face labour problems in the civil service of the country.

Mr. Dinsdale: The minister instructs the commissioner.

Mr. Nielsen: Everything the commissioner does is either with the acquiescence of the minister or by his direct instruction. How high handed can the government be? Imagine telling a government employee that his ordinary freedom of speech is abridged by virtue of his employment!

I say this bill goes too far. It puts the government employee in the position of a second-class Canadian citizen. Certainly safeguards are required to prevent government employees, who acquire information by virtue of their employment, from making an unjust and dishonest profit. But the bill in its present form constitutes an umbrella-type of prohibition. No government employee can acquire any interest whatsoever in any corporation or venture in the north if, in acquiring that interest, he will acquire lands or an interest in lands. This, to my way of thinking, is too broad a prohibition and ought to be ameliorated. I am willing to see the bill referred to committee after second reading, in the hope that the government will bring forward appropriate amendments.

While I am speaking of amendments which I anticipate the government might introduce, may I ask for the relevant section to be simplified. The language at present is much too complex. I ask for another section couched in simpler language to be introduced, a section containing merely the elements which it is desirable to prohibit, and no more. It ought to say merely that a government employee should not be permitted to acquire an interest in lands when, because he has come into possession or may come into possession of knowledge by virtue of his employment, the information so obtained may enable him to make an undue or dishonest profit.