

permanent, government has officials here competent and suitable to administer offices of Commissioner and gold commissioner as now combined together with their present duties. Unnecessary to add to Yukon staff. To do so under present conditions will be flagrant waste public money.

That, perhaps, was rather an extraordinary position for a member to take, as to patronage in his own constituency, but as the minister has observed already I have had a long experience in the territory and am willing at any time to co-operate with the government in the interests of good government and economy.

I received a reply to that telegram from the Prime Minister to the following terms:

Winnipeg, Man., Oct. 5, 1924.

Your telegram has been repeated to me from Ottawa, Hon. Charles Stewart who is with me in Winnipeg tells me that Gold Commissioner Mackenzie has been called to Ottawa to discuss Yukon affairs and in his absence competent official will be placed in charge in Yukon. Such reductions in staff as appear necessary will of course be carried out.

W. L. Mackenzie King.

I made it plain to the government that they had officials enough in Yukon and did not need to send anyone else. There was absolutely no necessity to send in Mr. Reid to take Mr. Mackenzie's place, nor do I think there was any necessity for bringing Mr. Mackenzie out. However, the government in its wisdom did that. Now, for some reason the government has been calling the gold commissioner from Yukon to Ottawa pretty frequently within recent years. As the premier's telegram to me of October 5 says "the gold commissioner has been called to Ottawa to discuss Yukon affairs." Well, you cannot go down from Yukon to Ottawa and back again for nothing; and for the life of me I cannot see that there was any necessity to bring the gold commissioner out at that time to discuss Yukon affairs. The government has in its employ a number of officials who have had Yukon experience, and quite a number who within very recent years have visited Yukon. I am sure if the minister wanted any expert and up-to-date advice on Yukon matters he could have got it from the Director of the Northwest Territories and Yukon who visited Yukon within the past few years. Moreover the government has had a special auditor up there within recent months. As I say, there are numbers of men here in the employ of the government who are competent to give advice on Yukon matters. In addition to that I venture to suggest that the minister might have got some advice from the member of parliament for that district, and I think he could have relied on it. I do not think the minister can recall any occasion

on which I have given him advice that was not in the best interests of Yukon administration.

Now, I have made an examination of just what this method of bringing the gold commissioner from Yukon to Ottawa on several occasions in the past, and this shuffle in offices, has cost the government, and how much the government has unnecessarily paid out. I find that for the year 1923 the gold commissioner was paid a salary of \$5,000; a living allowance in one item of \$1,750; arrears of living allowances from April 1, 1919, of \$5,750.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I should like to call my hon. friends' attention to the fact that those arrears were granted by the Civil Service Commission. I am not asking for immunity from responsibility because the account was supported by officials of the department, but it was scrutinized and recommended by the Civil Service Commission. I want to put my hon. friend right on that point.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): I do not pretend to say that the amount was unauthorized, or that it was paid in any improper way.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil). The idea my hon. friend is desirous of conveying, however, is that the minister increased the living allowance of the gold commissioner for periods in which he had been drawing a smaller amount than was allowed him.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): And had managed to live in the meantime. Does the minister suggest that he was not in favour of that increased living allowance?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): My hon. friend is scarcely correct. These revisions are going on all the time, and while the requisitions are made by the department the granting or refusing of them is in the hands of the Civil Service Commission. The observation my hon. friend made was "that the gold commissioner had managed to live in the meantime". I suppose he had; I did not hear of him getting starved out, or anything of that sort. The point I want to make clear to my hon. friend is that the back pay in question was allowed him by the Civil Service Commission. At the same time I do not want to escape responsibility because the officials of the department could have refused the requisition. I simply called my hon. friend's attention to the actual facts.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): I cannot quite see the force of my hon. friend's reference of