

wanted him to do, or that he volunteered his services. At any rate, be that as it may, by whatever road he reached his job, he is employed by the wartime prices and trade board, according to the information I have. Quite probably he is doing a satisfactory job.

Does my hon. friend argue that because he was employed by the wartime prices and trade board and getting a salary of \$3,700 a year, when we had a chance of getting fluorspar from his property we should have turned it down because of his government employment? I do not think my hon. friend would argue that seriously, for a moment.

The main point is that fluorspar was badly needed. This man had property on which there was fluorspar, and we entered into arrangements for its development. It was done on a basis that we thought was reasonable, and offered a reasonable chance of the government's receiving back the money it had advanced. I still maintain that position. Whether Mr. Miller made a profit out of it, or whether he had debts, or whether he was employed by the wartime prices and trade board, or employed anywhere else, are not factors in the matter, so far as the department is concerned. The main point is that we helped to finance this property, and we are getting repaid for it. Then, too, we are getting fluorspar, which is badly needed—and after all, that is the main consideration.

Mr. WHITE: It is all very well for the minister lightly to brush aside spending the mere bagatelle of \$35,000. Where I live, and where this money was spent, it is considered a large sum of money. But of course the way in which this government deals in millions and billions, it is a trifling amount. I think the minister overlooked the point, entirely, or perhaps he can tell me if it is the usual thing to find persons coming to his department, or to some other department of government, and putting up a proposition under which they will not be called upon to risk one cent of their own money, and will receive out of the public treasury of Canada sufficient funds to operate a property by remote control, under foremen, and thereby make a substantial profit. That is what I am objecting to. I think it is entirely wrong for any citizen of Canada—

Mr. CRERAR: Does my hon. friend contend that Mr. Miller should not have been allowed to make any profit?

Mr. WHITE: After he had paid you, he could make all the profit he wanted to, certainly.

Mr. HOWE: Since my department is responsible, perhaps I might ask my hon. friend a few questions. Has he any evidence whatever that Mr. Miller made a profit?

[Mr. Crerar.]

Mr. WHITE: The Minister of Mines and Resources says that he does not know anything about it but that he is going to get the information.

Mr. HOWE: Does my hon. friend know?

Mr. WHITE: I am not answering your questions.

Mr. HOWE: The hon. member is basing his statements on an assumption he cannot prove.

Mr. WHITE: Do not get off on any line like that. All these fluorspar properties were financed entirely by the government—Miller, Reliance, Trent and Gilman. Not one of them was able to finance alone. Since these fluorspar properties are all located within an area of one or two miles, and are probably the same vein, would it not have been more reasonable for the government to take over these properties and operate them themselves instead of advancing all these moneys to these four different companies, having four sets of everything, equipment and all the other things needed for these various properties.

Mr. CRERAR: In reply I would refer the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough to the hon. member for Davenport who, speaking this afternoon of another development, stated that he was opposed to the government operating properties, and I confessed that I agree with him. Now the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough comes along and accuses the government for not having taken over these properties and operated them as government enterprises. I would suggest to my hon. friend who leads the opposition, who is a philosophical gentleman, that he try to reconcile these differences among his supporters.

Mr. GRAYDON: You have a job of that sort to do on your own side.

Mr. CRERAR: I do not know whether the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough contends that the owners of these fluorspar properties should not get anything for them. Perhaps my hon. friend could tell the committee how much money the people who own these fluorspar properties have made out of them in the last fifteen or twenty years. I am advised that the properties were so unprofitable that they were not being operated, and that operation came about only because in the stress of war this material fluorspar, of which I confess I know nothing, was found very useful for fluxing purposes in the making of high-grade steel, which was urgently needed. The metals controller learned of these properties and wanted to get them developed. It may be; in fact it