

*Territorial Lands Act*

The amendment before us is intended to accomplish this purpose. It will see retained the requirement to have individual acquisitions of land sanctioned by orders in council. It will make more realistic the application of prohibitions on Crown employees in respect of any interests in territorial lands. Finally, but perhaps most important, it will remove from employees the threat of summary dismissal for an innocent contravention of an excessively restrictive and impractical requirement.

**Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot quite bring myself to refer to the parliamentary secretary as the hon. woman, so I shall have to continue my practice of referring to such persons as "the hon. lady."

**Mrs. Campagnolo:** How about the hon. member?

**Mr. Nielsen:** The explanation given by the hon. lady horrifies me in my belief that the minister is unaware of the precise nature of what is being attempted here. It is my understanding that the minister holds the belief that the restrictions prohibiting government employees from acquiring such interests as share interests in companies holding lands, or an interest in lands in the north, should be eased. This is not the case at all. The change is accomplishing the easing of any penalties associated with employees who contravene the prohibition set forth in the act, and that is all it does. It seems to me that it is an unduly harsh restriction which is placed on government employees.

I can understand, for instance, a mining recorder being prohibited from acquiring an interest in mineral claims which are contiguous to an area under active exploration. I can understand a mining recorder being prohibited from acquiring shares in a company which is active in the exploration field and which has produced results which are privy to that government employee and not to the general public. These conflicts are readily understandable, but for the life of me I cannot understand why we must impose a prohibition on a government worker in the department of travel and publicity to prevent him from acquiring shares in a mining corporation. Someone in travel and publicity is not likely to know any more about that than a member of the general public. The broadening of the sections by the bill before us now enlarges the prohibition to prevent any such employee from acquiring any interest in his own name, or through any other person, in any corporation that purchases, or acquires, or holds such lands. It seems to me this places the government employee in the position of a second class citizen and the section should not be extended so broadly.

● (1500)

In her comments on the bill the parliamentary secretary to the minister assured us that the bill does not alter the original intent or purpose of the legislation as it now stands in the Territorial Lands Act. I suggest to her that this simply is not true. It does alter the intent and the purpose of the section because there is no prohibition in the section as it now stands which would prevent a government employee from acquiring an interest, by way of shares, in a corporation that purchases, acquires, or holds lands or any interest therein. It does indeed alter the intent of the section to that extent.

[Mrs. Campagnolo.]

The hon. parliamentary secretary touched on what is a sore point in the Yukon, and I am sure in the Northwest Territories as well, when she said that the acquisition of land by government employees is readily controlled by the administrative structures in place now. I am sure she is completely unaware of the impossibility—I was going to say "next to impossibility" but I think I can use the term absolute impossibility—of the ordinary citizen acquiring lands in the north at all. For years it has been difficult to do so.

A few years back when I wanted to buy a piece of land I had to have a reference from this House before the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections because of some over-bearing bureaucratic decision that by buying a piece of land from the federal Crown I was somehow interested in a contract with the Crown. That was very quickly cleared away, but that is the kind of approach that the bureaucrats have in the administration of Crown lands in the north which come under the jurisdiction of this act. They feel that they own the land and that in no way is the ordinary citizen going to get a look in, so to speak.

It is simply impossible for a person to acquire any lands in the Yukon and I can cite example after example after example. A press release recently issued by the minister said that all applications for agricultural lands are now cancelled and there will be no more disposition of agricultural lands in either of the two northern territories for two to three years. That is a great agricultural policy, Mr. Speaker.

The bureaucratic mind, 4,000 miles from the site, concluded that there is no possibility of a viable agricultural industry in the north and that therefore no lands will be allotted for that purpose. Recent press reports in Yellowknife told of a family who had gone to live in the Northwest Territories from Quebec and were running cattle on slightly over 40 acres of land. Then the minister's press release was issued, the lease was cancelled and the family has to get off the land—right now. I am sure my colleague from the Northwest Territories will know the case I refer to, and there are even sharper injustices that I could cite all afternoon.

People who have been in possession of agricultural leases in the Yukon for well over a quarter of a century have found that the leases have been cancelled and there is no opportunity to have a new application considered. I know of one person, born and raised in the Yukon, whose grandfather was a member of the Northwest Mounted Police there. This man had an application for agricultural acreage approved by the branch, approved by the commissioner on behalf of the minister, and now has been told that he must get off the land, and further, that if he does not move his ten head of registered Appaloosa horses off the land they will be confiscated because they are trespassing. He was told that he should go back to Alberta where he came from and homestead there. That is the attitude of this most far seeing, thoughtful and innovative government in its agricultural land policy in the Yukon Territory.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** That is the just society.