

"During the first ninety days of the present fiscal year 6,109,000 acres of Government land were filed upon. Should this increasing ratio be maintained, between twenty-five and thirty million acres will be taken from the public domain the present fiscal year."

The above statements are taken from a report made this week by the Senate Committee on public lands, 500,000,000 acres now left.

Many years ago Uncle Sam started in the real estate business with a landed property amounting to nearly two billion acres. There are now left in the hands of the Government about 500,000,000 acres of this vast empire. Never before in the history of the Land Office has the absorption of this land by private interests been so rapid, so eager or so stupendous in the acreage involved.

The laws as they stand to-day were drawn during an era of free land when apparently no thought had to be given for the future. That future has come, however, quicker than was dreamed of by the builders of the Homestead Act of 1862, and the laws which have in the past served a most beneficent purpose, are now shown by the Government records and by the reports of Government agents and experts to be a great open door for perjury, fraud and theft of every possible description, which in any way, direct or indirect, can lead to the obtaining of Government land by private or corporate interests.

"Instead of following the injunctions of Jackson, Lincoln, Grant, Cleveland, Harrison and Roosevelt, we are making" says the Senate Committee, "all possible haste under our present most unfortunate land acts to turn over to wealthy men and corporations this rich heritage of the people. The population of the United States, to-day eighty millions, will doubtless reach one hundred and thirty millions in the next twenty-five or thirty years.

"Where will this rapidly increasing population find