

not mean they were forever to levy toll on the rest of the Dominion of Canada through the development of a railway and port in the north.

The minister states that certain transportation facilities are available, and yet elsewhere he rather suggests that a moratorium has been granted because there are not sufficient transportation facilities to enable the development to proceed. This is, after all, a minor matter. The lack of transportation facilities, the fact that the value is, as the minister has said, undetermined; the further fact that at present there is no commercial plant for reduction—all these considerations make the present a particularly opportune time to take possession of those areas and deposits. If we wait for one or two or three years, as is so frequently the case, it might very well be urged that vested interests are at stake. By that time the promoters would be in control and would have behind them large amounts of capital. But now we are getting in on the ground floor, as apparently the only man who has claims at the moment is the prospector, who could very easily be satisfied.

Mr. NICHOLSON: What about those who have furnished all the money necessary to enable the prospectors to go in there and do the work they have been doing for the last ten years?

Mr. WOODSWORTH: If we expropriate the mining claims, the simplest method would be to make a refund. That is what we do in expropriation cases of various kinds. Take, for example, the man who has settled and built a little home; a railway is going to run right through his place and his land is expropriated. The owner may or may not be refunded all he has invested; it is considered a minor matter whether he is compensated to that extent or not. The railway, it is decided, must go through, and the court determines what under the circumstances the man should receive. It would be comparatively easy to indemnify those who have furnished the money to grubstake prospectors.

The minister further says that so far the development of mining areas has been by private enterprise. We all admit that, but our contention is that we have reached the stage when that policy ought to be abandoned. That is especially true in this particular case where the physical welfare of so many people is at stake. There seems to be no reason why in the future we should continue the haphazard policy of private development that in the

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

past has undoubtedly meant the exploitation of our great natural resources in order that a few might grow wealthy at the expense of the great majority of the people in the community.

The minister says that he is willing to give a fair share to the state. Our contention is that the state owns all; not that a few royalties should be paid to the state, but rather that the state should be considered, in the words of the Prime Minister the other day, as the trustee for development in the interests of all the people. That is a new point of view, and it is one that we in this corner should like to put forward now. It is quite true that in the development we must reward the prospectors, those who have gone in and done the pioneer work, but we have reached the stage where it should be recognized that not a small royalty but the whole resources should belong to the state. The crumbs should be thrown to private individuals not to the state.

One point that strikes me as being of the greatest importance in this matter is the claim made by our scientists that radium is essential for the treatment of cancer. None of us is an expert in that phase of the question; we have to take what the medical men tell us. But if their statements are at all correct, it means that the welfare, the safety, the health of hundreds of thousands of people are at stake. If that be true, I can hardly understand the attitude of the minister in dilly-dallying with an important question of this kind and refusing to state a forthright policy in dealing with it. It would seem to me to be the right thing to settle this matter as one of principle. If it is discovered within the next few months, or even if it is at the present time held by scientists, that radium is essential in the treatment of cancer, the government should immediately set aside those areas in which it is produced as belonging to all the people and proceed to work them in order that radium may be made available for those who need it.

Mr. STITT (Nelson): I thought the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth), having been up through the north would have a greater knowledge of the usefulness of a prospector than he appears to have according to the statement he has made on the floor of the house. Were it not for the prospector, there would not today be a mining company operating in Canada.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Granted.