

The minister further recommends that at any time within five years after the approval of this minute of council, the company shall have the privilege of purchasing a portion, not exceeding one-third of the total area comprised within the tract reserved, the terms of sale to be \$1 per acre.

How much land is that? It means that they have the privilege of purchasing 122,874 acres for \$1 an acre. That is an absolute sale by the Department of the Interior, and when these people pay that money for their 122,000 acres I take it that no conditions of settlement will interfere with their right to hold it in perpetuity; it is a sale of 122,874 acres of the most valuable land that can be selected in these townships. Has the minister any concern as to whether that would be carried out or not? He says: I am not concerned whether this transaction is good or bad, I have no right to cancel it at the present time. Does the minister think it good policy to lock up land for thirty years with the rapid settlement now going on in that country? If the company has not complied with the provisions under which the land was locked up, does the minister not think that it is his duty and the duty of the government to cancel that holding and take back that land? It is held upon certain conditions, those conditions have not been complied with. Eight years, nearly one-third of the thirty years, has elapsed already and nothing whatever has been done except, it may be that they have purchased the land. It is of no interest to the minister that the time runs on, that the land becomes more valuable, that it is held up there out of the possession of the government while these parties are trying to peddle it around the country for sale. The minister recommends that at any time after five years they can purchase so much land. On what condition has this privilege been given?

That the company shall locate on the said tract, within three years from the commencement of the survey thereof by the government not less than fifty settlers eligible to make homestead entries under the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act, that within five years thereafter the company shall locate 100 settlers, eligible to make entry, and shall continue to locate one hundred additional settlers.

Why do they want to do that?

The minister is in receipt of a communication dated December 28, 1899, from the Peace River Colonization and Land Development Company, of Montreal, in which application is made for the reservation for colonization purposes of the tract of land coloured pink on the sketch annexed hereto and lying between the Grank Forks of the Peace and Smokey rivers, midway between Peace River Landing and Dunvegan, in the district of Athabaska.

The objection to the company in applying for this reservation is to establish agricultural and industrial settlements in that part of the country.

How far have they been trying to do that? What evidence have they given the department that they have made any effort in the world to bring any settlers there? They have given evidence that they are trying to sell their interest in it, peddling it all over the country to sell it to other capitalists in the United States or any other country in the world and make money out of it, as the Robbins Irrigation Company did with theirs, and as those who held the grazing leases did with theirs, but as to the real object which they gave the department and which the department accepted as a justification for giving the reserve, we have no evidence whatever that there was any effort to comply with that condition.

—which would appear to be well suited for the purpose and to thus provide homes in Canada for persons who might otherwise contemplate moving to foreign countries, and at the same time induce the repatriation of Canadians who have already left the country.

What effort did they make to repatriate Canadians? Has the department any evidence that they made any effort in the world? This paper shows no evidence. There is evidence that they have been peddling it around to sell it. Is it not another example of the desire of these parties to get possession of the public domain to make money out of it by hawking it around the country, not to settle it or to fulfil the purpose specified, yet the government have satisfied themselves through the Minister of the Interior. This order in council says:

The minister states he has satisfied himself of the bona fide of the company and after giving the matter careful consideration he is of opinion that the application is one which it would be in the public interest to entertain.

He also recommends that they may purchase one third of that tract, that is, 122,874 acres at a dollar an acre, whereas a poor settler going up from Ontario, Quebec or any other province could not purchase a quarter-section in that country for \$1 an acre or for \$5 an acre. I have applied over and over again on behalf of these people, the actual settlers, who would be of value to the country and would enrich it by putting it under crop. They could not get an acre, but speculators from Montreal can get 122,874 acres at \$1 an acre.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES The company is offering it for \$11 an acre.

Mr. SPROULE. What is amusing the Minister of the Interior in my remarks? Does he think it is a huge joke?

Mr. OLIVER. Yes, I think my hon. friend is trying to amuse the House. He is aware that the company have notice of cancellation of their contract and he is talking as if the government was giving them this land when in fact they have refused to give them the land.