

and suspend for another year the royalties on the silver-lead output. I suppose no one in a public office escapes bombardment by people who for partisan reasons desire to see changes made. I am bound to say that, so far as I can ascertain, the administration of the Yukon has been very well carried on. If I have made a mistake of policy in bringing Mr. Mackenzie out of the Yukon, I think my hon. friend will agree with me that as gold commissioner he rendered very efficient and faithful service, and it seems to me he is entitled to some consideration therefor. Despite all my hon. friend has said, I cannot help but think that Mr. Mackenzie is admirably fitted for the job that we want him to do. There is no elaborate expedition planned. I do not know where the articles referred to came from, particularly the one in the Gazette. We are not planning anything different from what we have planned in other years. Mr. Henderson succeeded Mr. Craig who cannot any longer go with these expeditions. He is a very admirable officer and knows the country thoroughly, as does Mr. Finnie, who is sitting here and is administrator of the Northwest Territories. Should any dispute arise as to our right to the possession of that territory, I think the hon. gentleman opposite would be the first to rise in his place and criticize the government. I am trying to avoid such a contingency. To make frank statements with respect to what we have in mind at the moment perhaps would not be wise, because what we say here is flashed all over the world. We are quietly and unassumingly trying to maintain our right in the territory. They may not be valuable, but I think they are, and I believe the future will prove the correctness of my view. I frankly confess that our first consideration in organizing the expedition is the native population. I do not agree with my hon. friend that we should leave them to their own devices. That might be all right but for the fact that fur traders are coming in from the United States and from Denmark and Sweden, and we must protect the native population.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): I do not know Mr. Mackenzie, but I hope he will appreciate the generous action of the minister in withdrawing him from the Yukon for service in the Arctic regions. If that is a reward for good service, I would pray to be delivered from such a gift. The study of the Eskimos has been taken up by very few people, and I do not think that because a man has seen service in the Yukon he is apt to be fitted for this important task, which requires a great deal of

tact and sound judgment. The Eskimos have their own peculiar laws, and it would be very difficult for us to interfere with them. For instance, the minister says there are rumours that the Eskimos are suffering from famine. Well, part of the daily household work of the Eskimo woman is devoted to chewing her husband's shoes to keep them soft, and if an inexperienced man found these women so employed, he would be quite mistaken if he rushed to the conclusion that there was a scarcity of food. It would also be very difficult for us to interfere with the marriage customs of these people. They have always practised polygamy, and very often they trade their wives. An inexperienced administrator would find himself in trouble if he said to those people, "You must discontinue this custom." However strange the custom may seem to us, naturally the Eskimo thinks it is all right, and very often he returns to his first wife if he is left alone. Then too, the Eskimo is superstitious; he believes in certain spirits and is convinced that he who dies a violent death goes at once to the highest regions of bliss. This leads to their disposing of one another in a way that we would regard as murder, but they look upon it as the shortcut to their valhalla. Their customs are also peculiar with respect to their old people, and in this they are not very far behind what the Greeks practised in their palmiest days. The Eskimo believes in enjoying the present to the full, and he gorges himself at every meal. Consequently, when they come to a time of want and famine they move out to find food and they leave the old people and the sick behind to die. They believe that is a thoroughly proper custom, and it would be difficult for any inexperienced administrator to go up to that country and tell the people that they must take care of the aged and the sick and abide by our laws. The minister is doing a very dangerous thing in sending an inexperienced administrator among these people, and he will find himself some day minus a very good gold commissioner in the Yukon but with a very poor administrator or investigator of the customs of the Eskimo.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): In 1921-22 the amount of this vote was \$208,170; to-day it is well over \$352,000. What is the chief reason for the increase?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): In 1921-22 the sending of a summer expedition to the north had been discontinued, and that accounts for a fairly good portion of our present expenditure. Since then we have established five or six new police posts throughout that north country, and although that does not