

*Yukon Minerals Act*

Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) in very forceful and comprehensive terms. The Yukon is one of the old established areas of Canada, established even before the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta which came into Confederation in 1905. I think the minister is well aware, as a result of his many visits to the north, that because of the long traditions that exist in the Yukon and the growing desire for autonomy, before any initiative is taken in this matter that is going to be helpful it will be necessary to have extensive consultations with the responsible people in the north, including the Territorial Council. During the course of my remarks this morning I want to indicate, by quoting statements from residents of the territory including members of the Territorial Council, that this is still precisely the case.

In reviewing the introductory statements of the minister, let me say he has done a very excellent public relations job. The present administration is very long on PR and sometimes short on actual involvement. We have the phrase "participatory democracy" that has been one of the shibboleths of the present government. But if we are to have participatory democracy we really must get down to the grass roots and consult with the people most concerned. It has been said that there are politicians who are born great, have greatness thrust upon them, and achieve greatness; but in this modern age of PR many of the politicians achieve their position as a result of hiring capable press agents.

In the minister's statement to this House, he used the phrase that Bill C-187 is "the updating and modernizing of the Yukon Quartz Mining Act of 1924". He suggested that the changes were going to be minor, such as using a mound of stone rather than wooden staking posts, for example. That is quite logical because wood is scarce and stones are plentiful in the Yukon. Then, there is going to be the use of metallic tags and an increase in the number of claims allowed from 16 to 36. This is what is known as the "soft sell". The minister also makes the point that financial return to the Crown will be more generous than under the existing Yukon Quartz Mining Act.

I want to raise a point that appears at page 4000 of *Hansard* for March 5, a point that is a vital aspect of this debate and the real point of controversy. The minister is reported as saying:

The bill not only provides for more efficient local management but also for some new measures to stimulate the mining industry which is already flourishing in the Yukon.

I am going to make that the text for my remarks this morning because that one sentence brings into focus the main area of controversy. Instead of providing for local management, the bill is placing more and more power in the hands of the bureaucracy. The new act provides for sweeping powers to be given to officials and the minister, and it is for this reason that there has been some strong protest from the Yukon Territory. The minister also talked about stimulating the mining industry, and then immediately used the contradictory phrase "which is already flourishing in the Yukon". If the mining industry is flourishing in the Yukon, why do we have to go through the exercise that has been initiated by the introduction of Bill C-187? The question of local autonomy or,

to use the minister's phrase, "efficient local management", is the essence of the problem at the present time.

● (12 noon)

In the last two decades since the establishment of the Department of Northern Affairs in 1953, there has been a growing sentiment in favour of more local autonomy. A promise was made that by Canada's centennial year, 1967, a giant step would be taken toward local autonomy. That giant step was not taken, with the result that there have been increasing protests from the residents of the Yukon Territory. These protests initiated a report by Mr. Carrothers which went into the difficulties in some detail. The report has been made available to members of the House. I want to deal briefly, however, with a more recent confrontation on this problem which occurred when members of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Constitution of Canada were in the Yukon Territory last September. There, the Yukon Chamber of Mines appeared before the committee, represented by Mr. Dave Robertson. In this regard I should like to quote from the *Whitehorse Star* of September 17, 1970:

What was described by one M.P. on the Senate Joint Committee as a "thorough and thoughtful brief" was presented Tuesday night at their first Whitehorse hearing, by Dave Robertson on behalf of the Yukon Chamber of Mines.

During the first day of their Yukon visit, members of the committee had travelled to Dawson City and heard a number of speakers there, before flying back for an evening session in the Elks Hall here.

That refers to Whitehorse.

The Chamber of Mines' brief sparked a two-hour discussion in which almost every Senator and Member of Parliament took part.

The essence of the brief was that members of the Yukon Chamber on Mines, as represented by Mr. Robertson, felt they had not been consulted fully concerning the bill which is before us at the present moment. Their protest was in the same terms as that presented by Mr. Simmons back in the 1950's and again by the present member for the Yukon at this time. Let me read further with regard to that brief:

The Chamber of Mines brief, designed to be applicable to the development of all the Yukon's resources, summed up its recommendations in the following words:

"The initial establishment of the administration of all regulations governing the resource industries to be located where direct contact with those persons developing the resources can be maintained, as in the provinces. The transfer of control of the resources, flexible and subject to other considerations.

"Local involvement in legislation affecting the Territory and the development of its resources, by requiring the local government (the Territorial Council) to become involved in the legislative process affecting matters which would be the concern only of the Territorial Council of the Yukon had status equal to the provinces. This is no more than a right already enjoyed by 21 million Canadians.

That places the point clearly in focus in respect of the man who was representing the resource development industry in the Yukon Territory. If I may be a little more specific, one of the councillors elected in the latest elections in the Yukon last summer, Mr. Norman Cham-

[Mr. Dinsdale.]