

and ever since I have tried to have another blast furnace put in there so that the plant could be worked to one hundred per cent capacity. Whenever I have spoken in the house I have referred definitely to the rolling mills section, but the minister rose in his place and said that the plant was working to one hundred per cent capacity. I do not know why he should have made a remark like that; probably he was just ignorant of the facts. He should have known that the rolling mills section of that plant has, I believe, never worked a 24-hour day. I have a full report on the whole matter, and I was in hopes that another blast furnace would be put in so that this plant could be worked to full capacity.

I understand that at last the Department of Munitions and Supply has consented to put in another blast furnace, so that now the plant will be able to go ahead and employ more men. But it has taken the department four years to realize that fact. Think of all the scrap we have been shipping from the west to the east, even to Hull, Quebec. When I was home in Three Hills, the little town in which I live, I saw a car of scrap steel at the station, and I was told by the station agent that it was to be sent to Hull, Quebec. Even the hon. member for Rosthern has complained about there being no industries in the west. We have been shipping all this scrap steel here and then shipping back the finished product when all we needed was a blast furnace in Calgary.

I recall the president of the manufacturers' association in Alberta coming to Ottawa after the minister made the statement that that plant was working one hundred per cent. Why did he come here? He told me that he came here to get the Calgary rolling mills working one hundred per cent. When I reminded him of what the minister had said, he told me that that did not make any difference, the plant was still not working to capacity. This shows a lack of planning. I do not contend for one moment that all the blame should be placed upon the Minister of Munitions and Supply, but I do say that when a member points out these things to him he should make a special investigation to see whether they are true or not. If they are true, then he should attempt to alter the situation that exists. No man is perfect and no man can, without more help, look after a job as large as the one he has to look after.

Here is another situation which I believe requires immediate attention. We are rationing everybody on oil. Those people who are freezing in houses heated with oil are nearly freezing to death because they cannot get

[Mr. C. E. Johnston.]

sufficient fuel. Yet we have in Alberta the world's greatest potential supply. Listen to that, "the world's greatest potential supply". That takes in a lot of territory. But what is being done? Hon. members know that the members of the Social Credit party have always been after the government to do something with the oil field in Athabaska. That is not the only place in Alberta where there is oil, yet nothing has been done. I believe the minister promised last year that they were going to build a little pilot plant, but the Abasand company has been producing 400 barrels a day. Surely if the government had wanted to go in there to bring about an increase in production they could have done a tremendous amount in that regard. But again procrastination was the motto. It seems that the government will not do anything until a crisis is definitely upon them. Then they try to get out from under. I have a clipping which I took from the *Calgary Herald* of January 19, 1943, with regard to the oil situation. It reads:

Claim Canadians fail to see need

Canadian government officials are "dumb" because they fail to realize the importance of development of a supply of oil in western Canada to make the Alberta to Alaska highway of paramount service to the war effort according to an article in the *Cut Bank* (Montana) *Pioneer*.

The article points out a greater realization of the importance of oil to the war effort is held by United States government officials.

"Oil is desperately necessary for any armed force operating from Alaska and we have neither the petroleum products available nor the tankers or tank cars for their transportation to supply a large armed force in Alaska," the newspaper quotes a report made to the government by Representative W. J. Cole.

Then I have another clipping taken from the *Calgary Herald* which is headed, "Largest oil pipeline in world completed by U.S." In the article it is stated that they have built over 500 miles of this pipeline and are going on with an extension of something like 800 miles. They are getting somewhere. They are not waiting for the crisis to develop. I have before me another clipping, dated January 15. Speaking of the oil output it says, "Oil output down three hundred barrels a day."

Our war supply is going down—so is the government for that matter—and the government is not doing much about it. It is a very serious situation, and as time goes on it is going to grow more and more acute. It is time this federal government got busy, for that is where the responsibility lies. The responsibility is not with the provincial government or any other body, but with the federal government. Oil is definitely a war necessity,