

Supply—Indians—Radium

I will not read the manner in which the deductions are to be made, as that is not relevant to the argument, but the important point of that clause is this:

The actual market value of the output at the pit's mouth or, if there is no means of ascertaining the market value, or if there is no established market price or value, the value of the same as appraised by the mining recorder shall be ascertained.

That puts it in the power of the minister of the day to set a market value, and the price of that particular mineral at the pit's mouth. In addition to that, the following clause was added to the present regulation in force this year, being section 130:

The governor in council reserves the right to make such additional regulations from time to time as may appear to be necessary or expedient in the public interest, governing the development and operation of any mineral claim or mine acquired under these regulations, in which, in the opinion of the minister, ores containing radioactive elements occur in sufficient quantity for extraction; also regulations governing the production and conservation of such ores and the elimination of waste.

Those are the regulations at present in force, dealing with government control so far as mineral operations are concerned.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): When was that regulation passed? What is the date of the order?

Mr. MURPHY: They became effective on April 2, 1932. I do not think I need extend my remarks at greater length at the present time, except to say this. The government have not been unmindful of the value of radium to the people of this and other countries. We have been told by the medical profession that radium is very valuable in the treatment of cancer. We know also that the present supply of world radium is controlled by a monopolistic company, and we have also been informed that the price of radium is altogether too high in view of the cost of producing the mineral, although as I said earlier in my remarks, we have no accurate figures as to the actual cost of production. The Belgian company, however, claim that they have materially reduced the price of radium, from \$120,000 per gramme to \$70,000 and, in larger quantities, \$50,000 per gramme.

How may the government exercise control over these deposits? The deposit which is now known to be in existence, although as to its extent or richness we have no definite data, is in private hands. There exists in Canada no commercial plant for the reduction

[Mr. Murphy.]

of the ore. The right to that deposit has been acquired by prospectors who have spent a long time in the north, men who went in there and have pitted their strength against the elements, have suffered hardships and, under the laws of Canada, have acquired certain rights. These rights must be respected.

Mr. CAMPBELL: If the department had enforced the regulations the rights would have been extinguished; it is only by the moratorium that they have any rights at all.

Mr. MURPHY: I must take exception to the statement of the hon. member; it is not quite correct. Simply because the regulations have been changed to allow a year's moratorium, it does not necessarily follow that these men would not have gone ahead and done their representation work. They might have done so and it is hardly correct to say that this work would not have been done if the moratorium had not been granted.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): They are operating now.

Mr. MURPHY: I am not in position to say that they are not even now carrying on that representation work. They are actually mining to-day and I would be very much surprised if they are not doing much more than the \$100 per year of representation work required by the regulations.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Why the necessity for the moratorium?

Mr. MURPHY: The moratorium was not put on solely at the request of the discoverers of the pitchblende deposits, in fact I do not think they made any representations. The representations were made by those who hold claims of zinc, lead, copper and silver deposits rather than by those who are engaged in mining this radium ore.

As I say, this matter could be controlled by means of royalties so that the state would obtain what is considered to be a fair share for the state, that is, for all the people. Legislation could be passed by this parliament whereby in the case of radium a royalty in kind could be made available for the people of Canada. No legislation exists at the present time to permit this action being taken, and I merely mention the different methods by which control could be exercised. The government is fully aware of the value claimed for radium in the treatment of disease, but as to just what method will be adopted in order to secure for Canada the benefit which is justly her due, I am not in position to say. This