

willing to buy war savings stamps." These men are sitting along the tracks; they are unemployed.

The other day I received a non-political letter from the city of Drumheller. It is signed by Mr. Harold A. Brown, the city clerk and treasurer, who says:

I am instructed by the city council to send you a copy of the resolution which received the endorsement of the council at the last meeting, as follows:

That whereas there is considerable unemployment and stagnation in the Drumheller valley, and, that the production of coal has reached its lowest tonnage over a large number of years.

Is it not amazing, Mr. Chairman, in this time of war, when we need to conserve our exchange, that according to the council of the city of Drumheller coal production is the lowest it has been in years? The resolution continues:

And whereas it is of national importance that the Dominion of Canada be placed on a one hundred per cent productive basis in regard of commodities to enable her to earn the maximum amount possible for the carrying-on of the war.

Therefore, be it resolved:

That at this meeting of the Liberals—

So that I am not arguing from the political point of view.

—of the Drumheller valley district we heartily recommend to the dominion government that they take steps to put through an order that will ensure the consumption of Canadian coal in the Dominion of Canada to the fullest extent of its capacity for production, and, we particularly recommend that the three prairie provinces i.e. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta be confined to the consumption of coal produced in the Dominion of Canada, except in such cases which shall be defined by the fuel controller.

That gives clear evidence of what these people desire, and as I have said, it is a non-political appeal. We do not intend to make it a political football; but the urgency is there.

I had a telegram from one other organization in Drumheller—I do not happen to have it here—who plead for the same thing. This great industry of Alberta and Nova Scotia is at an all-time low. The condition in Alberta is not the same as the minister described in relation to Nova Scotia. I do not think there should be any differentiation between the two producing areas, and I am not pleading especially for one more than for the other, because I recognize that mining, like agriculture, is one of our basic industries.

While speaking on this question I am reminded of an article which was written by Doctor W. L. Stewart, well-known commentator, and which has been reprinted from the June, 1940, issue of the *National Home Monthly*, having a circulation of over 250,000

[Mr. C. E. Johnston.]

copies. He is dealing with the subject of the importation of coal, and I will read part of the article:

What are we thinking of, if we continue this wastage at such a time as the present? It was bad enough in relatively quiet years to send so much money out of Canada, for a benefit in great measure illusory: it meant that we had to provide a livelihood in idleness for large bodies of miners who, but for our habit of thus buying abroad, would have been sustaining themselves by their own labour. But it is many times worse now, when there is so much that we cannot produce at home to meet our war needs, so much for which we are bound to draw upon United States manufacture, and for which we must pay in such American dollars as are obtainable only at high discount in exchange for our own. We cannot too soon bethink ourselves of how to maintain a tolerable balance of trade, and each practicable reduction of imports makes the task easier. Coal is our most obvious product on which to become, as the Germans in their four-year plan say, "self-sufficient."

To learn from a resourceful enemy is a valuable practice, especially during war.

I do not know whether the minister has considered this question as thoroughly as he might have done, but I am convinced that a tremendous saving of Canadian dollars may be made by putting our miners to work. I do not contend for the total exclusion of coal from the United States, because probably some anthracite from that country will be required for special processes in manufacture, but certainly all our bituminous coal could be supplied from Nova Scotia and Alberta. I endorse without hesitation what the minister said a while ago, that the coal from Alberta, particularly that of the Crownsnest pass, is of exceptionally high quality.

In my opinion the minister would be well-advised to put on an intensive campaign of advertising of Alberta coal. In some parts of the dominion there is a wrong conception of the quality of both Nova Scotia and Alberta coals. Possibly the large concerns in eastern Canada which deal in coal are inclined to misrepresent it. I know definitely that it has been misrepresented in this city. Not over a week ago I was talking to a man who owns an apartment house here, and, speaking of what he called Drumheller coal, he asked, "Do you fellows out in Alberta use that coal?" I said, "Why, yes, we use it all the time." "Well," he said, that is funny, because I got a load about six months ago, and before it was in my cellar two months it was all broken apart and was just dust." I said, "Certainly you did not have good Alberta coal." "Well," he said, "I bought it as good Drumheller coal." I know that he could not have had coal of good quality, because I put Drumheller coal in my basement, and after having had it there over a year I needed an axe to break it. So