

parliamentary committee. It is more or less an experiment and is recommended by the royal commission and by several parliamentary committees. It is a very small amount and provides for 5,000 men who will be afforded the opportunity of living in these houses. The amount will be placed at the disposal of the Red Cross at Kamloops. They are going to supervise the building of the houses and they will also administer the rent and insurance. The amount that will be paid as rent will be sufficient to cover the interest on capital expenditure, the insurance and the depreciation, the total amount being met in twenty-five years.

Item agreed to.

Amount required to provide for expenses in connection with a trial shipment of Alberta coal to Ontario, with the object of determining the actual cost of carriage by rail, by payments to be made to the Canadian National Railways at the rate of \$1 per ton, \$25,000.

Mr. SHAW: Will the minister explain this item?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): This money is to provide for an experiment to ascertain the cost of carriage of 25,000 tons of coal from a central point in Alberta to some central point in Ontario. The initial cost of \$7 per ton is to be paid by the operators. If it should happen that the cost runs to \$8 the federal government will pay \$1 per ton and if as estimated by the railways the cost should be \$9, the Alberta government will also contribute \$1. That is the basis of the arrangement and a check is to be kept both by the Alberta government and by the railways.

Mr. ROSS: I thought this proposition had fallen down.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I had not been notified to that effect, but a few days ago Sir Henry Thornton made the statement that owing to the fact that there was a reorganization in freight rates he would not be able to carry out this experiment. Of course, if the arrangement does not go through we will not use the money. I have been accused of being somewhat recreant in my duty, it being said that I had not accepted responsibility in this matter. Now I do not want to be deprived of the necessary funds in case the arrangement should be revived and the shipment made.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): There is a suspicion that there will be a shortage of coal in Ontario. I think the minister should be urged to see that something is done to carry out this experiment.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil). I have been extremely anxious to have it done. The arrangements were made three weeks ago and there has been a great deal of criticism on account of the delay both in Ontario and in the mining area, but I have been in no way responsible. I did not have the money voted but we had provision for it in the estimates and that is why I am asking that the vote be put through.

Mr. MACLEAN (York): Is everything ready now for the experiment?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes.

Mr. MACLEAN (York): Then go ahead so far as I am concerned.

Sir EUGENE Fiset: Will the minister be kind enough to tell us what action has been taken in connection with the proposed legislation with regard to the production of coke from Canadian coal?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I am anxious to go ahead with this bill but there have been difficulties in two directions. Those who desire to have the matter gone on with feel that the assistance is not sufficient. On the other hand there was very strong opposition from some sections in this House to assistance of any sort being given, but I want to say frankly that if Nova Scotia coal, quite irrespective of the difficulties now prevailing, is to compete with the American product in the territory which belongs to it, some help will have to be given, and I am quite prepared to give the situation further study and make further recommendations. I thought the assistance was on fairly generous lines, but apparently there is some criticism of it. On the other hand there seemed to be some considerable opposition in the House to assistance of any sort. I do think that Nova Scotia coal has to have something to assist it if it is going to get into the market which rightfully belongs to it in this part of the country.

Mr. SHAW: The minister has told us something about the tripartite agreement between the federal government, the government of Alberta and the Canadian National Railways. I would like to know if it is in writing or if it is a verbal agreement, because I do not see how the Canadian National Railway Company can withdraw. I wish the minister would give particulars. I think if Sir Henry Thornton or the Canadian National have withdrawn, they should be urged to reconsider their position because, as was suggested by one hon. member, the position in Ontario may, in view of the possibility of an