

I know of no question the solution of which would be of more importance to this whole Dominion than the question of the development of our low grade iron ores on a commercial scale. Probably it will be impossible ever to develop those ores in such a way that they can compete with the higher grade ores of the United States without assistance in some form, but I do wish to impress upon the minister the importance of giving every attention to this matter. I hope he will personally look into it, because it is really of grave moment to Canada. The solution to that question would put us in a position to use the thousands of millions of tons of iron ore which we have in this country, and it would mean a vast industrial development in Canada.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): We are very much alive to the importance of scientific research in this direction, and we are watching every development and keeping in close touch with every move made by the Bureau of Mines of the United States, the Mining Institute of England and similar institutes throughout the world where a study of this question is being made, because without doubt it is one of the most important matters confronting Canadian industry. One rather pleasing feature is that the high grade ore in the United States, as my hon. friend knows, is rapidly nearing depletion as is their anthracite coal, and the problem of our low grade ores, which I think are quite comparable to theirs, will then be brought very much to the fore. So I think we all realize the importance of discovering processes and methods which can be commercially applied.

Mr. BENNETT: I desire to make some few observations with respect to this department generally. For a few weeks—it is a pity it was not longer—I was acting minister of this department, which is manned by a number of very efficient, hard-working and not over-paid officials. In the main they are endeavouring to do a great service to this country, but the real fact is that a very great proportion of this amount asked for is money absolutely lost. Why? Because in the first place in each province there is at least one university undertaking to do some of this work; then again the province is endeavouring to undertake some part of it, and there is also the Research Council which desires to take its share of this obligation. Unless and until there is coördination of the efforts of the provinces, through the universities and through the departments of government, the Research Council and this Dominion, I am

bound to say that the federal Department of Mines becomes more or less the fifth wheel on the coach. What is the sum total of the real services rendered by this department to the Dominion of Canada during the past twelve months? Just sit down and consider that question. We spent over half a million dollars in this department; what is the sum total of its contribution to the wealth of the nation?

The great problem now confronting us is how most readily to create new wealth, and mining offers a very ready means to that end. Last year we created new wealth through mining to the extent of something over \$242,000,000. I use the word "create" perhaps not in the exact sense; we took that amount of new wealth out of the earth and converted it into products which were convertible into money to the extent of nearly a quarter of a billion dollars, the largest amount we have yet succeeded in realizing in this way. What contribution was made by this department? What did it do to make it easier for the men who labour this year to win from the soil its precious minerals in order to make new wealth, as compared with the preceding year? From the closest study I have been able to make, and I have looked into it carefully, I submit that we have not coördinated as we should the efforts of this Dominion in this direction. I find a university doing something; the Research Council wants to do the same thing. Take for instance a matter of which I was speaking to the minister only the other day. South of Calgary we have large pools of natural gas, and great efforts have been made to utilize these for the public good; they supply Calgary with heat but not with light. In addition to that, after the crude naphtha is taken from the wet gas which comes from the earth, a large proportion of this gas is lost or burned up, and the question of what can be done with it is engaging the attention of scientists. Up to the moment no one has been able to arrive at a conclusion, but instead of having a real coördination of effort on the part of the departments and services interested, that is the universities, the provinces, the Research Council and the Dominion, separate efforts are being made with a result that nothing is achieved.

We know that carbon black can be taken from that natural gas after the crude naphtha has been removed, but we also know that carbon black, or lamp black as we used to call it as boys, is only available to the extent to which a market can be found for it. There is a market for this product in Canada: it is used in the rubber business. It is also used