

tario and Quebec at much cheaper rates than we can now get it from the United States mines.

I merely throw out the suggestion once more: that an active policy under responsible government is much better than dealing with theories about having control by the Railway Commission or any other body, and by that policy we must develop our roads and our coal mines within our own borders.

Mr. CURRIE: I have no desire to prolong this discussion. I rise simply to call the attention of the Government to something that I think might be done in the way of assisting the transportation of coal from the eastern to the central part of Canada. Along the Great Lakes we have a number of wharves and docks that are not equipped with coal handling machinery, and the lack of such facilities was found to be a very great drawback in obtaining coal from the United States by water. That condition exists along the St. Lawrence, and also, I understand, in the Maritime Provinces. I know that a plant for rapidly unloading coal from vessels is very expensive; on the other hand, if you had to depend on the primitive method of unloading by horse and bucket, it is also very expensive because of the length of time the ship is held in port. A type of self-discharging coal vessel, developed in the United States, has been very successfully used along the Great Lakes for a number of years. This vessel comes up to the dock and unloads anything from 25 to 500 tons without the use of any appliances on the dock and without employment of coal-handlers. I suggest to the Government the advisability of considering, in connection with their shipbuilding programme, the building of half a dozen vessels of this kind. They could be loaded St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes and unwith coal from Nova Scotia, proceed up the load their cargoes at Government docks and wharfs, which can be found at nearly every town and village along the coast, without requiring any machinery whatever for the unloading of the cargo. Then, these ships would be useful in another respect, because during the winter season when they could not proceed up the Great Lakes they could trade with South America and Central America, carrying Canadian coal to small points along these southern coasts where coal is required and unloading it in the manner that I have mentioned. I direct the attention of the Government to this matter, because at present the carrying of

coal from Nova Scotia in coalers and bringing it to central points where there is expensive unloading machinery is a more or less costly operation. I believe that at only two or three points are these unloading docks to be found in all of lake Ontario, one at Kingston, one at Toronto, and some at Hamilton. The same applies to lake Erie and lake Huron. If self-discharging coal vessels were built they would be splendid earners, because they make a charge for unloading the coal just the same as if the cargo were unloaded in the ordinary manner; they get about 25 cents per ton for the unloading. It does seem to me that we are allowing the coal that we have in the East to be taken away from us. A few years ago Nova Scotia coal was largely used to supply all the districts from Montreal east; now all the districts around Montreal and the St. Lawrence are supplied with coal which comes from the United States. That is a condition of affairs which we should not allow to continue. The carriage of coal by water is the logical way of handling it and is cheaper than any other method. Apparently there is an impression in the minds of some hon. members that the shortage of cars in the United States is largely responsible for the difficulty in our obtaining coal. I have before me a copy of the Iron Age, the official organ of the iron and steel trade in the United States. I find that in the columns of this paper hundreds of second-hand gondola coal cars, capable of passing inspection, are offered for sale. For instance, there is an offer of two hundred cars from Birmingham, Alabama. Well, if there was a shortage of cars, a company in Birmingham, Alabama, would not be offering to sell two hundred gondola coal cars. There must be something wrong if that is the case. Besides, I do not think this Government should have much difficulty in getting plenty of cars, either by lease or by purchase, to bring coal from the United States. But I am informed by some large users of coal that in the United States the moving of coal is permitted only in train loads. That presents a difficulty to Canadian users of coal, especially those in Ontario. No distinction is made in the charge for demurrage as between concerns that are using coal directly, under their boilers and in their furnaces, and those who are dealers. We all know that the shortage of cars a few years ago arose through the fact that the dealers frequently kept their cars of coal on the sidings for a considerable