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ALIEN ENEMIES

According to a press despatch from Fernie, the Coal Creek mines of the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company ceased operations on June 9, owing to the miners going on strike because the company refused to immediately discharge all German and Austrian employees.

We are not yet aware of all the facts which led up to this action on the part of the miners, and it is possible that the aliens may have made themselves so obnoxious that loyal citizens felt called upon to clear out the undesirables. If, however, the alien enemies were attacked simply because of their nationality, then the striking miners need not look for praise from fair-minded citizens.

Unquestionably the mining camps should be freed from the class of men who are unwilling either to be loyal subjects of the British Empire or to keep their German opinions to themselves. But a man may be a good citizen even though he be not naturalized. There are many decent, industrious men of German nationality in Canada who are a credit to the Dominion and who have earned the right to live and work here during war as during peace.

There are many loyal Canadians out of work in some of the mining camps in which alien enemies are employed. It is, therefore, natural that there should be complaints from certain quarters. Why should the companies employ Germans and Austrians, while others are idle? Why are these subjects of the mad war lords allowed in our midst? Why are they not dismissed by their employers? Why are they not interned? These questions are frequently asked and deserve an answer. That is why we venture to suggest that the alien enemies have rights which should not be lost sight of.

It is evident that some of the alien enemies in the mining camps are thoroughly in sympathy with the German Government. Of these some have been foolish enough to give voice to their joy at the successful accomplishment of criminal acts such as the sinking of the Lusitania. Avowed enemies such as these should be promptly interned.

On the other hand there are many Germans who are either not in sympathy with the German war lords or who take care to conduct themselves in a manner not hostile to the country in which they live. Such men we should not hastily throw out of work, for their labor is useful to the country as well as to themselves. Why should we make public charges of men who would otherwise be productive workers? And even if there were no economic loss, is it fair that these men who are striving to live as becomes decent citizens should be made to suffer because others of the