

Mr. BROOKS: An increase of ninety-five to ninety-seven cents in the price of coal, but that did not cover the cost at all. The cost in New Brunswick amounts to something like \$1.20 a ton, and the coal producers are receiving a subsidy of \$1 a ton. I would respectfully submit that something should be done for the coal area and the coal industry in New Brunswick, for otherwise the coal industry there will be driven out of business. While it is a small industry it is important in our economy, some 1,500 miners receiving employment. But the industry is being starved; it is not receiving the attention it should have. The subsidy paid is not in proper proportion to the cost of production in that area.

Mr. HOWE: The statement just made by my hon. friend on behalf of New Brunswick is the statement that is made to me by every coal operator in Canada. None of them is getting enough. I can say that we are paying plenty, and we are paying it out of emergency funds. We have a royal commission on coal grappling with this problem and I sincerely hope that it finds a solution, because some day the emergency funds are going to stop and I do not know what the mines which have been leaning increasingly heavily on the government as the war has proceeded will do then. I can tell my hon. friend that coal in the maritime provinces costs \$10 a ton at the pit mouth in some mines, and if anyone has any illusion that it can be sold at that price he is due for a rude awakening. I do not know the answer. It is for the future. To meet the needs of the various areas we are paying to-day a flat rate subsidy throughout Canada which would give any serious student of the coal situation reason to pause. I sincerely hope that the Carroll commission will find a solution, but I cannot think what it will be.

Mr. BROOKS: My understanding is that \$3 a ton subsidy has been paid in Nova Scotia, while in New Brunswick it is \$1; it is less in the west. It is based upon the cost of production, but in the New Brunswick area they have based the subsidy on the wrong premises. In every other province production in the shaft is kept separate from production in stripping. The cost is much less in stripping than in producing coal in the shaft. But in New Brunswick they have averaged the costs for production in the shaft and stripping, which brings the average away below what it ought to be, and the consequence is that our coal operators in New Brunswick are being driven pretty well to the wall. All we ask is that we be treated just the same as the

mining areas in every other part of Canada. It is a matter which the minister could very well look into.

Mr. MATTHEWS (Kootenay East): Does the answer which the Minister of Labour gave to the questions asked by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar apply also to the Crownsnest Pass area?

Mr. MITCHELL: I do not want to get into an argument on the estimates of my colleague, for one could make a long speech on the subject of coal mining. The average production per miner in western Canada is three and a half tons; in the eastern field it is down to 1.63 tons, although it was above two tons before the war. In the United States, averaging stripping and deep mining, the production is about 7 tons per man. In Nova Scotia they have deep mines and subterranean mines. In Alberta in some parts they take the coal off in the strip. They have not deep mines like they have in Nova Scotia. It is a complex question, as my hon. friend has said. As I said in reply to the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar, when the war is over and price is the determining factor, it will not matter where the coal comes from, Great Britain, the United States, western Canada, eastern Canada or any other country. I indicated to him that at this very moment you could ship west Virginia coal to the mine face in Nova Scotia, pay the transportation charges and deliver it cheaper than it could be mined in that province. That is an alarming situation, and you cannot just wish yourself out of a jam of that kind. As my colleague the Minister of Munitions and Supply has said, we hope that the coal commission has the answer to this difficult economic and competitive question.

Mr. HANSELL: The very forceful speech which the minister has just given—

Mr. MITCHELL: A forty-minute speech in five minutes.

Mr. HANSELL: I am not going to get into a forty-minute speech on monetary technique, but the minister might have to modify his statements a bit if he recognizes that there was a monetary technique to take care of this situation. I do not desire to hurry any report from the coal commission, but since both ministers are in their seats I would ask if they can give us some idea when the report will be submitted. Let the commission take all the time they want to report on this complicated subject, but is there any possibility that the report may be presented this year or early next year?