

allowed to die a natural death, it would have been doubly hard to bring it back to life—and that its resurgence might have been delayed much longer than it was. So there is very definitely something to say for keeping a function going even when it appears uneconomic if there is good reason for hope.

The fact that within the last five years the Alberta and Crowsnest coal industry has been rejuvenated as a result of huge export contracts with Japan, is history.

The development of this export business has been the result of a co-operative effort by the producers, the coal board, the mines branch and the federal government itself who, in spite of some doubts and misgivings, agreed to support the movement as long as it continued to show progress. This is one of the real success stories of the coal industry and the results thus far attained make the amounts expended on subvention assistance look very small indeed. A further bonus is that a greatly expanded export of Canadian coal to the western United States is likely to develop in future years so that the western bituminous coal industry now appears to have established itself on a solid basis for the foreseeable future.

The leadership shown by the board in finding stable markets for the western high rank coal presents a good example of the board's use of its intimate knowledge of and close contact with industry in guiding the latter from an uneconomic position to one of viability in its exports to Japan. Without the technical and financial assistance of the board with its specialized knowledge, it is doubtful that there would have been the same degree of success achieved in the development of this important export trade.

The board explored the potential and technical needs of the Japanese steel and gas industries. It suggested and guided a number of technical studies by the research arm of the Energy Mines and Resources Department. This included the implementation of its recommendation to establish in Canada a technical-scale coking coal evaluating facility.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the Dominion Coal Board has served its purpose very well.

I wish to turn briefly to the impact of some of the foregoing on my area of Alberta, in particular. I do so only because the full force of the operations of the Coal Board has been felt mainly in two regions, Cape Breton and the coal mining areas of the rocky mountain district. All these mountain coal mines are in my riding or immediately adjacent to it, so the significance of the impact is national in character.

Before the advent of oil and gas there were prosperous, boisterous communities throughout the Crowsnest Pass region and at Canmore within the Rocky Mountain riding. Towns such as Blairmore, Bellevue, Coleman, Frank, Hillcrest, Burmis, Cadomin, Robb and Canmore were well known because of the wealth that was brought out from under the ground by the people who lived and worked

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in them. Then, slowly at first, soon at a quickening pace, the mines started closing as a result of dieselization. The coal branch area became a series of ghost towns. In the Crowsnest Pass area, both in Alberta and British Columbia, communities also declined. The few mines which remained in operation, such as Canmore Mines Ltd. and the predecessors of the present Coleman Collieries Ltd., did so mainly because of the subvention payments made to support the sale of the products of these mines. These subventions were very impressive. Their total for Alberta and the Crowsnest Pass area is more than \$60 million. They helped many miners retain their employment. They allowed many families to remain in the communities they loved and called home.

I had the great pleasure some months ago of visiting the mines at Canmore and going underground with the miners. I met many of them who had been working at this mine for thirty or forty years. They probably knew the rooms of the mine, as they are called, as well as most of us know the rooms of our houses. I know these men are very glad the government saw fit to continue the assistance to their mines so that they could continue to work at the jobs they knew best. The same applies to the miners in the Crowsnest Pass area. I recently was in this beautiful and historic region of western Canada and talked to many people regarding the coal industry there. I found that the people were pleased with the revival of the coal industry and optimistic about its future. They are proud of the fact that very soon their mines will be operating without any government financial assistance in the form of subventions, but they are also grateful that these subventions have kept their coal industry alive during its dark years so that there now is a future in the Crowsnest Pass area. Last year there were almost 500 people employed in the coal industry in the Crowsnest Pass area receiving wages of almost \$3 million.

But it is not only in these long-time coal producing areas that the industry has been revived. It is also being extended to new areas. The coal branch deposits will again be mined and this is giving a great impetus to the nearby modern town of Hinton where most of the employees will be living. The most impressive development, however, is taking place around an entirely new mining operation, that of McIntyre Porcupine on the Smoky River some 300 miles northwest of Edmonton. There, an entirely new town,