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### The Hoppe Coal Deal

Disturbing news comes from Ottawa of a raid being planned on an enormous scale upon the most important natural resource of Canada to-day, namely fuel. In Northern Alberta there is a coal deposit which is said to be fabulously wealthy. According to those who should know, it is the only deposit in Canada, yet located, of coal equal to the anthracite of Pennsylvania. Only tests on a large scale can show the extent of the field, but from the preliminary survey it is reported to be the greatest undeveloped coal land on the continent.

The mines were discovered by a German-American of the name of Hoppe shortly before the war, who staked out the property under the Dominion Mining Act. Interesting another German-American, Eisenberg, they planned development on a large scale and endeavored to induce the Canadian Northern to build a branch line 75 miles to the field. However, the war intervened and upset their plans. They were unable to pay the annual lease and Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, when he was minister of interior, canceled the rights with the idea of holding this valuable natural resource for the people of Canada.

Since the return of the new Government a company has taken over the claims of the original discoverers of the property and has applied to the Government for the right to appeal to the courts to see if their deeds do not still hold good. By order-in-council this right has been granted.

The Ottawa story goes that the syndicate, composed largely of Liberal politicians, is arranging to sell the rights for \$3,000,000 to a British company. An Ottawa correspondent writes in regard to the alleged raid in the following strong language:

"The Klondyke mining scandals, the Transcontinental Railway debauch, or the Western timber limit alienations, are all minor exploitations compared to the coal area raid now well on the way to completion. Names mentioned in the corridors of Parliament as connected with this raid are not all confined to the Government party. While the Government is fathering legislation ostensibly to protect the public, a representative of the raiders sails on Saturday for England to conclude negotiations to hand over this property to a British syndicate for \$3,000,000. The raiders know that the Government's "protective legislation" is a practical joke on Parliament. If this raid is not checked at least a dozen men will be rewarded for party service at the expense of the country, and all the West placed at the mercy of a huge coal octopus. It is the most daring attempt to secure control of an essential product ever proposed and likely to be perpetrated in Canada."

If he is right in his indictment, and this deal goes through, the King Government will soon find that the electors of this country are in no mood to allow an alienation of the most valuable and most vital natural resource the country possesses. The plea of Senator Pope in the Upper Chamber last week when discussing the question will be the echo of most Canadian citizens, Senator Pope said:

"This is not a coal mine; it is not a single vein; it is a great coal field. And I plead with you to see that it is not given away to any bundle of speculators, no matter who they may be. This is our coal; it is the future coal of this country. An area within a radius of 1,000 miles of that deposit includes the Pacific

coast, California, the State of Washington, the Dakotas and the whole of the Canadian Northwest. That deposit is within 30 miles of being as near to the head waters of navigation as Pennsylvania; and, while we have trains lying idle from the time when the wheat has gone out, which is about now, until next autumn, it is useless to tell me that we, owning these national railroads, cannot afford to operate those trains, even at a loss so far as overhead is concerned, in order to furnish coal to keep the people of this country warm, and to keep our money in our own country. To trifle with this thing, to hesitate, is to be lost."

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