

cause of the serious shortage at home, it will be difficult for Canada to consistently contend for increased supply from the United States unless an embargo is also placed upon the exportation of Canadian coal overseas.

The Provincial Fuel Commissioners find their task rendered more difficult as a result of P.C. 3004, of December, 1918, becoming inoperative.

In view of all the foregoing facts the undersigned have the honour to recommend that the fuel control such as existed under P.C. 3004, of December, 1918, should again be made effective and that a Fuel Controller, or some board with the necessary power, should be established, with a view of making an agreement with the Interstate Commerce Commission of the United States to ensure a permanent and steady delivery such as will meet the Canadian requirement as far as is reasonably consistent, and to enable the Provincial Fuel Commissioners to effectively direct and control distribution equitably.

(signed) J. D. REID,  
Minister of Railways.

G. D. ROBERTSON,  
Minister of Labour.

Hon. gentlemen will understand that the Order in Council, 3004 of December, 1918, is a final revision of the Orders in Council which established the Fuel Controller and which gave effect to the regulations which he recommended to the Governor in Council. They will understand further that the situation here disclosed is a serious one; but I do not wish it to be understood that the proposal of this resolution is the only action which is under our consideration. It is obvious that some effective effort must be made, if possible, to ensure greater supplies from sources within this country itself.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Now let me point out that when the United States exercise control and establish priorities within their own country, it is absolutely futile for us to expect that they will send coal to this country unless we establish in Canada some tribunal with powers corresponding to those that are exercised in the United States by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Public opinion in the United States would not permit any such course, and the reason is very obvious. The use of coal is restricted in the United States to certain purposes, under certain established priorities, which have regard, for example, to essential industries as distinguished from those which are not essential; we could not therefore expect the United States to send to this country coal to be used without any control whatever, and absolutely irrespective of essential industries or of any priorities. It is therefore absolutely necessary that we shall confer upon some

authority in this country the power necessary for the purposes which I have indicated. There were two courses which seemed open. One was to ask Parliament to confer upon the Governor General in Council powers similar in this respect to those which the Government possessed under the War Measures Act. I have explained to the House on more than one occasion that the Government is not desirous of assuming responsibility of that character, if any other authority can be named and any other machinery can be devised for the purpose of taking such matters into consideration and of carrying out effectively what was carried out I think pretty effectively by Mr. Magrath as Fuel Controller, under the Order in Council of December, 1918, and under the Orders in Council which preceded it in date. It therefore occurred to me, and the suggestion was approved by my colleagues, that inasmuch as we have a Board of Railway Commissioners in Canada—which I believe is not oppressed with too great a burden of work at the present time, which has wide powers in respect of many cognate matters, and which possesses administrative machinery very highly organized—that we might very well ask the House to confer adequate powers upon that board, instead of confiding these powers to the Governor in Council as they were confided to us under the War Measures Act—not only in this respect but in other respects. I present the resolution to the committee for that purpose. It is perfectly obvious that we cannot fold our arms and sit still and do nothing. Something must be done. Wide powers must be conferred on some authority to deal with this matter while Parliament is not in session. Even if Parliament were in session continuously during the rest of this year, it is perfectly clear to every one that Parliament would be utterly helpless in attempting to exercise administrative powers of this character. I hope, therefore, that hon. gentlemen are fully seized of the facts and that the resolution which I now propose will receive their approval.

Mr. LEMIEUX: I am not disposed to take pride in saying "I told you so," and it is not with a view to re-hash the statement I made the other day, and which was somewhat precipitated by way of a motion that I now rise, but simply to state that I am perfectly in agreement with the right hon. gentleman in the course he is now taking. I think it is the proper course, because this difficulty is principally one of transportation, and it is therefore quite fit-