

Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act

help more than the previous measure did. To that extent I think it is good. I am merely pointing out that if we are going to get to the root of the trouble in the gold mining industry, and we are going to have further trouble—our troubles are not over in the gold mining camps and subsidies are not going to prevent trouble recurring—then in my opinion we must insist, whether or not it is a matter of provincial rights, that certain employment conditions be observed. Surely the federal government has a right to lay down certain conditions under which public money is paid to any industry. We do that in other fields. Whether or not it be a provincial field, I suggest that if the gold mines are dependent on federal subsidies then the payment of such subsidies should be worked out in such a way that they are paid on condition that the gold mine operators adopt the labour standards and working conditions that prevail in other mining camps where the work is of very much the same nature as in the gold mines.

The hon. member for Cape Breton South gave dominion bureau of statistics and Department of Labour figures showing the differential that exists today in hourly wages and conditions. I could go on at great length to describe the conditions under which some of the people in the mining camps live. I could refer to the housing conditions in some of the camps. Nobody knows them better than the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mrs. Shipley). The hon. member for Timiskaming tried to assure us that her interests were with the miners rather than with the mine operators. I do not think anyone questions that. What we do question is the conflict of loyalties on the part of the hon. member for Timiskaming as between the political party that she supports and the miners themselves.

Mr. Croll: Oh, no.

Mr. Speaker: Besides the fact that these remarks are not relevant to the bill, they are somewhat offensive. They impute motives to a certain degree, and I am sure the hon. member does not wish to do that.

Mr. Noseworthy: I realize that I am not to impute motives to the hon. member. May I say that in my opinion the hon. member was attempting to justify the actions of the government in this respect and to emphasize the government's actions rather than the needs of the people who dig the gold from the mines.

I shall support the measure. I congratulate the minister on attempting to improve the situation. I merely want to point out to him that in my opinion, if we are going to avert trouble in the gold mines, we are going to have to have to do something more than pay subsidies with no strings attached to the gold

mine operators when they continue to allow present working conditions to exist and to pay the wages they are paying at the present time.

Mr. Speaker: If the minister speaks now, he will close the debate.

Hon. George Prudham (Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys): Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a word or two to correct what I think was wrong information given by the hon. member who has just spoken. I appreciate his expression of support for the bill. It is usual of course for members on the opposition side to say that a measure does not go far enough. On other occasions they criticize the government for spending too much of the taxpayers' money. However, in this case I think everyone who has spoken has favoured the continuation of gold mining assistance and the formula that is imposed under the legislation. The hon. member who has just spoken suggested that the gold mines vary the milling grade of their ore to suit changed conditions. I happen to have the record here over the ten-year period from 1942 to 1952 giving the ounces per ton of gold produced by all lode gold mines in Canada. The figures are as follows:

Ounces of Fine Gold Produced Per Ton of Ore		
Year	Amount in ounces per ton	
1942		•240
1943		•240
1944		•230
1945		•230
1946		•230
1947		•240
1948		•230
1949		•230
1950		•230
1951		•220
1952		•240

In the ten-year period, the maximum variation has been only 2/100 of an ounce of gold per ton. I believe this shows conclusively that the ore mined has not been affected by the varying amount of payments under the gold mining assistance act or any of the other conditions to which my hon. friend referred.

At this point I should like to say that I did not like the tone nor the import of the speech made by the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. Gillis), not because of what he said about the gold mining industry but because of his reference to the mining industry in general. I believe he said that he hoped the day would come in this and every other country when every last man could be taken from underground and the shafts sealed. He said it was no place to earn a living, and he hoped these men could some day be placed in factories and plants where they could enjoy the sunshine and fresh air, and work at production that would be useful to mankind.

[Mr. Noseworthy.]