

paying these wages as compared with the wages in other coal fields, I think it is pretty hard.

The contract miner in Nova Scotia gets \$7.22; on Vancouver Island \$8.20; in Alberta \$9.57. A machine miner gets \$5.77 on Vancouver Island, and \$8.02 to \$9.42 in Alberta. A hand miner gets \$5.05 in Nova Scotia; \$5.42 on Vancouver Island and \$7.50 in Alberta, and so on all the way down. Take the blacksmith: his rate is \$4.85 in Nova Scotia; \$6.05 on Vancouver Island and \$8.14 in Alberta.

Q. What is the explanation given of that?—A. They do not give any explanation.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Those are the average daily wages of the miners?—A. Yes.

Q. I think it is the fewer number of days they work per week.—A. A Calgary paper said:

“War between the coal operators and District 18 United Mine Workers of America is considered inevitable over the questions of the wage schedules for the ensuing year. The Union declares that it will accept nothing less than the scale which obtained in the last year, but the operators claim that they cannot continue to do business on the present basis, and that the scale which the men demand is out of all proportion to the cost of living, to the wages that are paid in other Canadian fields and in other Canadian lines of industry.

Appended are the contract rates for the various Canadian coal mining fields, and these give an idea of what the Alberta operators are up against.”

Those are the figures to which I was referring a moment ago.

“All the foregoing rates are for an 8 hour day.”

In some branches the Alberta rate is almost double that in effect elsewhere in Canada, and when the operators have to pay these high wages and also the high freight charges to their outside markets, because of long hauls, the handicap under which they labour is easily understood.”

*By Hon. Mr. Webster:*

Q. What is the date of that?—A. The date is not given.

Q. Is it recent?—A. Yes, I just cut it out the other day. I am quoting those figures because of what seems to me to be the abnormal price charged at the pit's mouth for Alberta coal, but I am not reflecting on it, because of these high wage costs in the first place, and because they have not a steady mining operation all the time. The men are laid off, particularly in the summer months.

Q. Are there too many operations out there for the demand?—A. Yes.

Q. So, therefore, there are too many miners for the work that is offering?—A. Yes.

Q. With fewer mines working, the miners would get steady employment?—

A. Their employment would be more steady.

Q. And they ought to get the lower rate of wages?—A. Then there is also the feature of storing Alberta coals—that is the domestic coals with the higher percentage of moisture; I am not speaking of bituminous coal, but the domestic coal that has a high percentage of moisture, and some of which will disintegrate under storage conditions, and shrink very materially in transit. I will mention a little incident that occurred to explain this situation. We carry the coal at the tippie weights. Some years ago the consignees were claiming that we were over-charging them in the weight, and our thought was that this coal was being stolen in transit; so I took the precaution to make a test of it. We sealed the car doors at the point of shipment, and I put a few special men just