

Importation of Fuel

be fixed by the government as they did, in war time, for butter, which sold at 29 cents per pound with a tendency to rise, and which they fixed at 22 cents, the same as they did with the price of cheese.

The public does not expect the appointment of a commission like that of 1919, whose main prerogative was to hold inquiries which furnished profiteers new means of monopolizing and further squeezing the people, but they expect to see a commission authorized to control the purchase of fuel imported and fix the sale price so as to allow dealers a fair profit only.

This question of fuel imports raises the question of the embargo on Russian coal and oils. It is admitted by analysts that the Russian coal is richer in calories than the Scotch, English or American coal. I fail to see why the government maintains an embargo on Russian coal which, according to my information, could be retailed at \$6 per ton on the wharves at Montreal. The same applies to the Russian gasoline which could be retailed at 12 or 13 cents per gallon. Why does the government, in these times of depression, maintain this embargo, when Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany and our neighbours, the United States have restored trade relations with the soviet republic; when our liabilities impose on us such urgent economy to triumph over unemployment almost nation-wide; when we know, by the history of all countries, that in order to bring on revolutions, to spread socialist, communist and bolshevist principles, there are no surer means than to permit profiteers to spread distress among the people through their abuse of power or the tolerance of their extortions; when we, with a small population of hardly 10,000,000 souls, know through experience that our attitude can in no way influence the antisocial principles of Russia; when Great Britain and all European nations, as well as the United States by their entirely opposite attitude condemn our conduct?

The mother country, queen of the sister nations of the British Empire, which fixes the world prices of all products, after having considered the trade offers of precisely those against whom we maintain an embargo, applies it to our products so far as the economic conference agreements permit it. Is it not plausible to think that we expose ourselves to be the tools of either the British or American trade, when, through experience we have found out that they are certainly neither the one nor the other more scrupulous than our Canadian coal importing companies; when we know that after Canada placed the

[Mr. Deslauriers.]

products of Germany on the black list, so that our consumers and merchants would not encourage her trade, Great Britain managed to send us boots and shoes manufactured in Germany, after having wiped out the country of origin's trade mark on the boxes and replaced it by one of English origin?

Are we not permitted to think that the United States and Great Britain, being able to obtain a superior quality of coal to theirs, at \$3 per ton, and gasoline, also of a superior quality, at 2½ cents per gallon, which can be mixed to their products, without possibility of being detected, and shipped to a market like Canada, where they will be paid for their coal \$17 per ton, and for their gasoline 29 cents per gallon, are we not permitted to think that they will not even take the trouble to mix their products before shipping them to us? They may, themselves, utilize all these imported products, seeing that they are of a superior quality, and ship their own, just as we note in Canada certain provinces purchasing electric current at advantageous prices, for their own requirement and sell their electric current to the United States at enhanced prices.

Mr. BARRETTE (Translation): Tell us something about the electric current trust.

Mr. DESLAURIERS (Translation): The purpose of my resolution is to prevent speculation on the people's distress and to prevent other nations from considering us as a nation so greatly deprived of intellect that we cannot assume any other part than the one of being unceasingly duped.

I think, sir, seeing that the Canadian people are struggling with depression and witnessing its spirit, each day, weakening, that energetic measures are necessary to solve the problem of unemployment.

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. This resolution may seem to a few—

Mr. BARRETTE (Translation): Out of order.

Mr. DESLAURIERS (Translation): —some-what radical. However, under the extraordinary situation we have to face, I think it is only just that coal and gasoline importers should be, in the future, forced to address themselves to the federal commission for their purchases; that transportation should be under control, as well as assurances and the handling of goods in this connection, and that the price of fuel should be fixed so as to allow dealers a profit of 12 per cent net. I shall add: if we wish to restore