

*The Address—Mr. Dumas*

The cost of living has risen in my constituency as much as elsewhere. With everyone here, I deplore this situation.

As stated by the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), "we are all affected by the rise in prices and the situation pleases no one".

On the other hand, the demand for manpower is very high and I hope our people will all be working this coming winter.

The farmers of my constituency keep toiling to clear and improve their farms. The arduous task they undertook is now producing results. However, if we want the progress of the farmers of our district to be on a par with that of industry, we will have to help those who clear the land and make it easier for the farmers to distribute their products.

I know our farmers. I know how steadfast they are, and if we help them ever so little we may be sure that they will do their full share in the development and progress of western Quebec.

The mine worker toils incessantly to produce ever increasing quantities of basic metals which are becoming more and more indispensable to our economy.

The workers in the Rouyn-Noranda, Cadillac, Malartic, Val d'Or-Louvicourt mining area have done very much for the development of that rich area and they expect from us the protection to which they are entitled.

The gold mining industry is going through a difficult period, and producers have to market the precious metal at a price infinitely lower than it should really be. Some mines are operating at a loss just so they can prevent disaster in municipalities depending solely on that industry.

Most of the workers in the region having invested their savings in real estate located in the various municipalities, the federal government must do its best to protect the future of these miners.

Fortunately, in order to overcome the difficulties facing the gold mining industry and the municipalities which depend on it, the government has maintained in force the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act. We hope it will remain in force in 1952, with even more generous provisions if possible.

The government cannot lose anything by doing so; in fact it will gain much. Here is the reason why. The gold producers acknowledge their responsibilities. They also parti-

cipate fully in the development of our other mineral resources: I refer to frequently used metals like copper, zinc, lead, silver, nickel, etc., which are in such great demand. An example will illustrate what I mean. Let us take the Sullivan Consolidated mine. This typically Canadian enterprise, which produces nothing but gold, is established in my region.

This mine during the years favourable to the gold industry had accumulated a certain working capital. It could have waited, could have accepted government assistance in order to maintain its financial position. But it did not do so. The directors of the company realized there was a strong demand for base metals. They lost no time in investing the capital in prospecting work and development of base metal mines. Thus, the Sullivan Consolidated played an important part in the development of the zinc and copper deposits of the East Sullivan. The same company also advanced a part of the outlay required for the development of important zinc and lead deposits in the Gaspé region. These deposits should be mined before long. In addition, this mine is spending large amounts on prospecting activities in many other parts of the country. I could give many examples.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that government aid to gold mines is well justified since, first of all, it prevents the turning of certain towns into ghost towns and the financial ruin of the majority of our workers. On the other hand, that money is repaid a hundredfold to the country, because it brings about the opening of new base metal mines that produce essential metals for our civilian and military needs.

The government realizes the importance of air transport in our district and, through the Department of Transport, it has provided landing strips near the cities of Rouyn and Val d'Or. The people of my country are grateful to the government for its solicitude in the matter. I must say, however, that in case of war, the Rouyn airport would not be appropriate for jet planes. I wish to draw the matter to the attention of the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton). I am confident the Department of Transport would willingly co-operate with the Department of National Defence to complete the work at that airport so as to provide, in case of war, a greater protection for the mining centres in the vicinity of those airports.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the war in Korea, which unfortunately seems to develop into an endless struggle, will end in