

makes some suggestions with a view to correcting the situation faced in his mine field. As I indicated a little while ago, he is one who admits quite freely that it is an extremely difficult thing to do. But he points out that a considerable number of miners are lost to his mine by reason of the fact that they are what might be termed farmer-miners. Supposing that is true, that is, that they leave their mines and go to their farms, and supposing a considerable number of them do that sort of thing—and he states it to be so—I should like to ask the minister whether or not he has ever considered closing up that type of small industry. It is often a sort of combination of farm and mine. Many of these men have little mines of their own on their farms, and they dig a little coal and do a little mining. I do not suggest that there should be any ruthless closing up, by the appointment of some controller who would say, "Do not do this." I do not mean to suggest approaching this from a negative point of view. But I wonder if it has been considered that it might be worth while to buy out these small industries upon the condition that the men who are working these "coyote holes"—I believe that is what they are called—would go to work in one of the larger mines where, as the result of the proper division of labour and the general technological development in industry their hands could turn out more coal than is possible for them to turn out from the little mine. That is one suggestion I would ask the minister to consider.

Then, there is another suggestion—and I think we must come to adopt something like it. Persons who work at extremely uncongenial types of work have to be given some incentive. After all, in other sections of our economy we have recognized that sometimes we must provide an incentive to get a job done. We have had to encourage certain industrialists at times. And quite the right course was followed in that respect. For instance, we could not ask the ABC company to make such and such an investment, because if it did, it would be stuck with a useless plant at the end of the war. Therefore we gave them an incentive by way of accelerated depreciation, or something of that kind. In a variety of ways we have given incentives at times, in the Canadian economy.

I think, sir, we have to come down to the fact that such uncongenial work as coal mining must be specially stimulated by some incentive, if we are to have it done successfully. I know I have done many different kinds of hard work, dirty work, and uncongenial work

in my time. But I remember that even when I was shovelling gravel on railway grades I would sooner have been doing that work out in the open air than have been working in a coal mine; and my views in that respect are the same to-day as they were then. I think the man who mines the nation's coal has to be paid for it something over and above the ordinary rate that everybody else can get at other more congenial kinds of work.

I recognize the problems in this connection. If we start to open a hole in the ceiling we may get into all kinds of trouble. I realize that we must take account of that. And that thought leads me to offer this suggestion: Might it be possible to work out some kind of scheme whereby, instead of immediate additional payments, there could be a payment into a bank account, where the money would be blocked. We are well acquainted with the expression "blocked payments" in respect of banks. Why could we not have blocked payments of wages to men engaged in this sort of work? It might very well be that that would be extended into certain other lines besides mining, but I do, indeed, believe that it will be necessary to do something of the sort in order to have men in this country do certain kinds of work which are uncongenial, and yet are very necessary.

I go further than that and offer what ought to be considered a stronger reason, although unfortunately it is not usually so considered. That reason is that I think it is equitable. But one has to be a realist, and he must recognize the fact that merely advancing the argument of equity is insufficient. As a rule, simply to urge that such and such a thing ought to be done in justice and equity never gets one anywhere. I believe Shakespeare would have called it a "bootless" remark.

In any event, I think it is equitable in this particular case, and it will be absolutely necessary to find some kind of stimulant for getting these uncongenial, yet extremely necessary kinds of work done. Anything I have said, of course, has not been offered by way of criticism. I believe my manner in addressing the committee is sufficient evidence of that. It is not the fault of this government, nor is it the fault of the minister that we have absenteeism, and this difficulty in the mines. But we are going to have more of it, unless we find some way now, before the coal shortage, of dealing with it. The suggestions I have made may be helpful; I hope so. But if they be not adopted, then I do urge that some sort of stimulant policy, if I may so describe it, be adopted; because we cannot take chances on