

*Correspondence on Surcharges*

this, together with the joint production committee, has resulted in over-all actual production in the mine being increased from 6,000 tons a day to 11,000 tons a day with a labour force of some one third less. Some other hard facts will demonstrate the value of changes to the committee. To drill a round in a passage, a tunnel, a drift or a rise the operation back in 1947 and 1948 required the use of some 500 pieces of steel in varying lengths from one foot to five feet. The net result, after having drilled for two days, was that one may have drilled about two feet into this hard rock. Now, with newer methods and better steel applied to the bit itself, the same miner is able to drill with some 36 pieces of steel an eight feet round in that same hard rock called chert. This rock is almost as hard as diamonds. One can see the very great benefit derived from this increase in mechanization. The miner himself is no longer packing a 235-pound machine 100 feet or 200 feet up a raise. He is able to take a light machine weighing from 80 pounds to 100 pounds and do this work, not drilling two or three feet but drilling eight feet. Of course, as a consequence his earnings have increased, on a piecework rate, to often more than double his base rate of income.

This is only on the question of drilling. There is also the matter of larger machines for disposing of that rock, and long-holed diamond drilling, all processes of mechanization. They have been able to keep within the market, and I might say, make a reasonable profit. The employees have also done much better because of these profits. They have gone a step further. The removal of this ore from the mine left a large percentage of iron concentrate which was simply drained off into a stockpile and was of no particular use. In order to employ the people who were being displaced by mechanization they went ahead and planned an iron plant.

I am afraid, Mr. Chairman, I will have to diverge just a little bit to include everything I have to say on this question. First they developed a fertilizer plant by taking the sulphur from the iron oxide that was being taken away simply to the stockpile, apparently of no particular use. It was decided to reduce the sulphur dioxide and they established a fertilizer plant. As a result of this about 150 tons to 200 tons of pig iron was simply being floated away into a stockpile.

Here was an incentive that was brought in by the Liberal administration of British Columbia a number of years ago. They agreed to subsidize any company that was prepared to make use of iron ore that was produced in the province. These people went to the provincial government and asked them to

[Mr. Byrne.]

reactivate this act and they were prepared, although this was a very costly process, to establish an iron plant. This has been accomplished. They are now producing fertilizer at the mine and they are also producing iron ore. Men have been taken directly from the mine. They were miners; trained as miners. They were removed in the first instance to the fertilizer plant. After instruction there for some months they learned to become operators and in a very short time they were employed in a supervisory capacity. So they were taken from the mine because of their displacement, then taken to the fertilizer plant and put to work there.

The same thing applies to the iron plant. This is where automation really takes place in so far as this operation is concerned. Men who were low in the seniority bracket have been taken from the mine and trained to sit before a huge panel. I am not a metallurgist, neither am I a technician; I am simply a miner. Therefore I cannot describe the process that takes place. But I was associated with these fellows; they worked in the mine with me and carried the machine with me. They are now sitting in an easy chair, such as my chair here, and looking at the boards. They are well qualified operators in the most modern iron producing plant in Canada.

This is simply a suggestion that I make. Industry itself has a very great responsibility; industry must be encouraged to take that responsibility. It must not believe, just because we have a great superfluity of words in the introduction to this resolution, that all is going to be well. They must take the initiative. I and most hon. members on this side of the chamber believe that industry has the first responsibility, and government has the responsibility to create an economic climate in which this type of thing can flourish.

*(Translation):*

**Mr. Dionne:** Mr. Chairman, it is the first opportunity I have today to congratulate you on your appointment to your present office, and I am very pleased to do so, because I saw for myself how much patience and fairness your colleague and yourself have shown at certain times of tension when feelings were running high.

We understand that this resolution is designed to give some kind of guidance to labour, in view of the employment variations resulting from the unavoidable transformations brought about by the progressive industrial evolution of our times, guidance which would consist, as I understand the