

Monetary Times

Trade Review and Insurance Chronicle
of Canada

Address: Corner Church and Court Streets, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Telephone: Main 7404, Branch Exchange connecting all departments.
Cable Address: "Montimes, Toronto."

Winnipeg Office: 1208 McArthur Building. Telephone Main 2663.
G. W. Goodall, Western Manager.

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OUR SERIOUS COAL PROBLEM

A serious warning as to the necessity for national organization was uttered by Sir George Foster at a Victory Loan meeting in Toronto last week. Just as we are now dependent on our own financial strength, so we may, as the war continues, be thrown upon our own resources in other directions. Sir George mentioned the multiplicity of regulations governing exports, including coal, from the United States to Canada. The time might come, comparatively soon, he said, when the United States, because of the exigencies of war, might have to ask us to depend upon our coal resources. As the neighboring republic assumes a larger share of the conflict, it would require more and more of its resources for carrying on the war. The lesson for Canada is the immediate organization of national resources for application to war conditions.

The statement of Sir George follows closely a similar plea of Sir Clifford Sifton at the recent annual meeting of the Commission of Conservation. War conditions have brought home to the people the critical position in which they stand with regard to fuel and the necessity for applying intelligent study to the whole question. Sir Clifford said that upon the whole question of coal, Canada is woefully behind the times. "Wasteful methods of mining are permitted throughout Western Canada," he said, adding: "No serious attempt has been made to grapple with the problem of preventing the serious and irreparable waste which is constantly going on in the mining of our coal areas. Provisions for inspection to prevent the loss of human life has been made by the provinces; but the permanent waste of very large quantities of valuable coal still goes on. What is required is a competent public service of technically trained men who will undertake the

supervision and control of the mining of coal upon Dominion lands and put an end to the waste."

This waste, in peace time, is bad enough; in war time, it is almost criminal. In national organization, the Dominion government must lead the way. The question of our coal supply is a matter for their immediate attention in co-operation with technically trained men.

In his article in *The Monetary Times Annual*, 1917, Mr. Arthur V. White, a well-known consulting engineer who has made a special study of this problem, repeated statements made from time to time by various United States authorities which cannot allow us to forget how dependent we are upon the United States for our coal supply. The situation presents a serious national problem for solution.

HALIFAX

To the city of Halifax, in its great disaster, the practical sympathy of the entire Dominion is extended. While the organization and work of national reconstruction is proceeding, the immediate task of relief is well in hand. Halifax will not be allowed to want or to appeal in vain. Every province will do its share in helping to mitigate suffering, to provide the immediate necessities, and to rebuild the devastated portion of that historic city.

To those States, municipalities, and other organizations in the neighboring republic, and to Congress, the Dominion expresses thanks for the assistance which they rendered so quickly. In a manner which typifies the splendid spirit of our neighbors, relief trains and ships were on their way to Halifax before even the advice of their despatch.

The explosion of the munition ship in Halifax harbor may not have been due to German machinations. At the same time, many will believe that the arrest of Germans in Halifax was delayed too long. After reading the evidence at the Kaltschmidt trial at Detroit, we cannot afford to allow enemy aliens much freedom of movement in this country. The testimony of one of the witnesses was that Kaltschmidt had conspired to blow up munition ships in New York harbor in 1915. At another German agency trial at Concord, N.C., a witness stated he had told United States Secretary Daniels of a plot to burn the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa four weeks before it occurred, and told him also just how it was to be done. If the Halifax disaster is devoid of Hun devilment, yet it reminds us of the dangers which war brings to a belligerent country even though distant from the battlefields. One of those dangers is the German agency system on this continent headed by cut-throat ambassadors, criminal diplomats, and their lawless gangs.

BUYERS OF VICTORY BONDS

Those who sold Victory Bonds were impressed particularly by the response of the farmers and factory workers. To the three previous loans, their subscriptions were comparatively few. To the Victory Loan these two groups of subscribers supplied many millions of dollars and represented many thousands of subscribers. In numerous large and small plants throughout the Dominion 100 per cent. of the workers purchased bonds. Like many other subscribers, they appreciated an excellent investment, the phase of patriotism and the fact that our