

Supply—Mines—Coal

article: "The United States government's answer to the threat of an east coast petroleum shortage."

Over a year ago I pointed out to this government the grave situation which might develop with regard to oil. I stated at that time it was definitely possible that the British oil supplies in Iraq and Iran might be lost to us. I can well recall some hon. members interrupting and saying that I was a great pessimist, that I should not be predicting such things. I should like to see the hon. member who would say that to-day. At that time I pointed out the necessity of developing the oil fields in Alberta and at the same time making plans to produce oil from coal. Had we had that foresight we would not be in the position we are to-day. Here is an article in the paper entitled:

Cut in use of oil products near in Canada. Very threatening situation being faced by oil controller, supply minister tells manufacturers.

What are we doing about it? What is going to happen if we delay the process very long? It is obvious that the minister is going to run up against great difficulty when he asks for increased production of coal in the next year. As the resolution, which I read a moment ago, points out, these men have been living on relief, but they are not going to continue to do so very long. They are going to look to other fields of endeavour for work. There is a shortage of labour in many industries in Canada. These men spend their lives equipping themselves to become miners and they are now being forced to find other work. Some are even joining the army. While it may be necessary to have some miners in the army, it should be clearly understood that once they are in the army they are taken away from coal mining. When the minister comes within the year and asks for an increased production of coal, where will he get the miners? He will be forced to reply, "Well we should like to have more coal produced, but we have no miners." That is the condition which is coming and coming fast, unless some provision is made at this time to see that these mines are put into production, and that more Canadian coal is used in Canada so that the miners may be kept fully occupied.

It would help our economy if, when we returned in the fall, a committee of this house were set up to investigate this matter and suggest a national coal policy. There will never be a time when the public could be more easily influenced to use Canadian coal. They are going to have to do so in any event. I realize that the minister faces some difficulty in bringing this about in those communities

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situated on water because coal can be brought in from the United States by water transportation much more cheaply than it can be brought from western Canada. There are, however, other places which should be using Canadian coal. The minister will say that we cannot increase the subsidy, but I think that argument is not at all well founded when we are considering a national coal policy. I believe it would be well worth while to increase the subsidy another fifty cents or even another dollar a ton. This would give more employment to our railways and would assist in getting rid of their terrible deficits.

There is, however, another way in which the production of coal could be increased, a way which has been brought to the minister's attention and with which he is quite conversant; this is something that could be carried on between now and the time parliament reassembles. Every effort should be made to increase the consumption of Canadian coal in those places in which it is now being used. Quite a few districts in central Canada, Ottawa being one, now use Alberta and Nova Scotia coal, and the district north of the great lakes, round Sudbury, could use much more of this coal. A proper advertising campaign should be carried on to induce the people to use more Canadian coal. A great deal of misinformation has been sent out about this coal, and if the people were properly informed as to its advantages I think we could almost double the consumption.

The minister will probably reply that such an advertising campaign would not come under his department. When the estimates of the Minister of Transport were being considered he was asked about advertising coal products, and he said that that did not come under his department, that it would be a matter for the Department of Mines and Resources. We are now considering the estimates of the latter department, and perhaps the minister can give us an answer. I do not care what department should deal with this matter; the point is that it should be dealt with. I think everyone will agree that such a campaign would increase the consumption of Canadian coal in those areas in which it is already being used. The estimated cost of such a campaign is \$10,000, but that is a small amount to spend to bring about this increased consumption.

The minister will have a great deal of difficulty in getting the necessary men to increase this production, and something had better be done immediately. He will be appealing to these miners to come back to their jobs when they may not be in a position