

in our western country? The members from the west should insist that at least one-half of the coal areas should pass to the provinces and be kept for all time as a fuel supply for the people of the west.

Mr. SCOTT. Why not say the whole of it?

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I am willing to give them the whole of it, but let us at least make provision now for one half of it. Just as sure as there is a sun in heaven, that coal will be given away in grants of one kind and another, or sold for a mere trifle.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It will be safe in the hands of the local government?

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I do not say that, but if we have two trustees like the Dominion government and the provincial government it might be better protected than if we had only one trustee. There should be an arrangement between the Dominion government and the local government; that this coal land will be kept for all time for the benefit of the settlers.

Mr. LAMONT. Will Saskatchewan share in that?

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. If Saskatchewan has no coal fields, then I am willing that she should have an interest in these coal areas. I preach the new doctrine in this House; that the people of the west should be partners of the Dominion government in the ownership and control of this public domain, and I challenge any man here from the west to deny that that is a sound proposition. Later on I intend to make a proposal that these new provinces should have at least one-half interest in the coal deposits of that new country.

Mr. HERRON. The Minister of the Interior suggested that the Dominion government would sell the lands cheaply for the purpose of developing the country, but I can point out to him that the sales they have made along the foothills have not had that effect. There was a sale made six or seven years ago of 10,000 acres to a foreign company, another sale of 15,000 acres to another company a few years ago, and not one shovel full of earth has been turned since. That land will be valuable in time to come, and I do not believe it is a good policy for the country that the government should sell it now at a nominal figure and allow it to remain there undeveloped.

Mr. OLIVER. That proves that what we need in Alberta is a market for the coal in order to give it value, and that in the process of development we must be careful how the business is handled or it will check that development.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I would not look at it in that way. I would think that the people who take up these coal lands should

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either develop them or pay a rental until the market does come. Why should they be permitted, without contributing one dollar to the revenue of the country, to hold for thirty or forty years, coal lands that will be worth millions of dollars and perhaps tens of millions of dollars at that time if the country is well settled? I cannot understand why in the name of common sense such a policy should be adopted. In most countries where these matters are well thought out the coal areas are leased and not sold out right. If they are not worked so as to produce a royalty, the people who hold these lands must pay an annual rental, so that they shall contribute something from year to year in respect to the increased value that these coal lands acquire through their being held. Both the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior stated this afternoon that these lands are of great importance to the people of the west, and that if they were handed over to them they would have to depend very largely upon these lands for revenue. They argued that the provinces would be less likely to take good care of them than would the Dominion government to whom these lands are of much less moment. I should think that argument would work the other way. These lands are of direct local concern to the people of the province, and in my view the province is more likely to take good care of them than is the Dominion. I do not know why we should suppose that the people of the Northwest are any more reckless, any less capable or any less honest than the people of Canada as a whole, or why the representatives of the people of the west assembled in their legislature would be any less capable, any less prudent or any less provident than the people of Canada as a whole. If they are not less capable, less provident, or less honest, surely they would be likely to take better and not worse care of these lands than the federal legislature.

Mr. OLIVER. I do not know exactly what the suggestion of charging an annual rental on coal property has to do with the subject under discussion.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I will tell you. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Oliver) said that these lands could not be developed because there is no market for the coal, and therefore, to follow out his argument to its logical result; it is a wise policy to sell these lands to speculators who will hold them until there is a market, and pay nothing to the public revenue while the increment of value is being added. I say that is not good policy, I say that in the meantime these speculators should pay an annual rental to the public treasury in order to give at least some compensation for the enormous profits which they in the end will make out of these coal lands.

Mr. OLIVER. I am quite willing to argue what should be a proper policy to pursue