

Atlantic Provinces Power Development

however, that the installation of major transmission facilities in Newfoundland would not benefit the people of that island, and for these plants and facilities the government stands ready to aid all four Atlantic provinces.

To sum up, Mr. Speaker, the bill proposes to do two things. It enables the minister, with the approval of the governor in council, to enter into agreements with the government of any Atlantic province so as to provide assistance to the province in the generation of electric energy by steam-driven generators and for the provision of transmission facilities. The second thing this bill sets out to do is to provide a subvention on Atlantic seaboard coal used in the production of electric energy in the Atlantic provinces.

The cost of the first part of the program so far as we can see at the present moment, would be about \$12.7 million in the next two years and another \$12 million to complete that part of the program. The amounts anticipated to be needed will be reflected in the estimates, and supplementary estimates when tabled. I should add, Mr. Speaker, that the amounts needed for such a program will all be provided without ultimate cost to the federal treasury.

The cost of the second part of the program will be at the presently calculated coal consumption rate of the Atlantic provinces, about \$1.7 million per annum.

The present government's policy, therefore, is to offer a three-point program to the four Atlantic provinces: First, the federal government will finance Beechwood and produce lower cost hydro power for New Brunswick; second, the federal government will extend aid, as required, to all four provinces in the construction of thermal plants and main transmission facilities within and between the provinces, where feasible. This program, coupled with Beechwood, will lower the power costs in the maritime provinces and should be of value to all four provinces.

Third, the present federal government will provide a subvention on Atlantic seaboard coal used for the production of power in these Atlantic provinces so as to equalize the cost of that fuel to the cost of coal used for the same purposes in Ontario.

With one exception, Mr. Speaker, I should hope that these comments, coupled with my remarks on January 8 and 9, should be sufficient to introduce the debate on second reading.

The other matter I should like to touch upon is a delicate matter of paternity. In the course of the debate on the resolution we heard a great deal from the other side of the house about the alleged paternity of this

[Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle).]

bill. The hon. member for Inverness-Richmond (Mr. MacEachen) stated in this house on January 9, as reported in *Hansard* at page 3075:

The very inspiration for the thinking behind this proposal came from an extremely important report made in 1954 by Professor Christie of Johns Hopkins University . . . submitted on September 20, 1954 to the dominion coal board.

I may say in passing that I heard some mention of the year 1949, but in going through *Hansard* I could not find the reference. The hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet and the hon. member for Bonaville-Twilligate (Mr. Pickersgill) were also at pains to show that this program was announced on March 14 and enlarged upon on April 9, 1957, by the government of which they were members. Everyone knows, of course, that the programs of the two governments are not similar. They are basically different. The former government's program was to give aid only to thermal plants and transmission facilities in two maritime provinces.

Mr. Lesage: That is not correct.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): This government is prepared to give aid for these facilities to the four Atlantic provinces with no strings attached and, furthermore, this government's program has two other points of substance which the former government would not touch, namely Beechwood and a coal subvention.

Mr. Pickersgill: Would the minister permit a question?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): If it is a question for information.

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, it is. Did I understand the hon. gentleman correctly to say that coal subventions was a subject which the previous government would not touch? I did not quite catch his words.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): That is correct.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is totally incorrect; in fact, it is quite untrue.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, I will let the people of the maritimes judge that statement.

An hon. Member: They have already.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): The only statement made by the previous government which could even be considered as relevant was made on June 6, four days before the election, by one or two cabinet ministers in the maritime area.

If I might go on with my statement, I was making the point that we offered to give aid