

*Atlantic Development Board*

great improvement to the system. This all adds up to the idea of considering that the Atlantic provinces be connected as far as is possible as a unit. This, in my opinion, should be another aim of the Atlantic development board.

It has been suggested that the establishment of this board results from recognition of the fact that the Atlantic region is a captive market for the more highly industrialized central provinces. I agree to some extent, but I also point out that Atlantic province industry has an advantage in overseas markets. I should like to point out to the committee that at the present time a food processing plant in Carleton county, New Brunswick, is shipping frozen peas and french fried potatoes by refrigerated steamer to the United Kingdom and Europe. This reflects great credit on the young men, the McCain brothers, who are operating this plant. It also brings to our immediate notice the possibilities which exist for enterprising, alert and industrious Canadians carrying on business, capable of exploiting overseas markets.

Now I return to the functions of the board. It has been suggested that all projects should be considered on the basis of their direct and indirect impact on economic development. The board must advise only after careful consideration of all the facts and not on preconceived ideas or prejudices. It has likewise been suggested that the board shall advise on measures and projects in both the public and private sectors. It should assist and encourage new resource exploration and development; the location of cornerstone plants; the development, in primary resource industry areas, of secondary industry related industrially or economically to the primary industry; and other enterprises which can have an impact on the course of economic progress.

The board itself, playing both an active and passive role, should also be able to initiate and give advice on projects. It should consider proposals made to it. It should also have an active role in the sense of initiating studies and making recommendations. It should be flexible in its thinking. It should be prepared to consider in what way economic development in any region can be accelerated. It must realize that there is no substitute for initiative and subsequent action.

I consider that the proposed legislation to set up an Atlantic development board is the most forward step ever taken in my lifetime for the benefit of the Atlantic provinces, and that it has tremendous possibilities which should increase the level of income and ultimately contribute to greatly increased employment in the Atlantic provinces.

In the light of our present situation the role of the Atlantic development board, in a

development program for the Atlantic provinces, might very properly be considered to be partly the development of the national economy with special relevance to the difficulties peculiar to the Atlantic region.

So, Mr. Chairman, because of my lifelong association with the Atlantic provinces, with their people and with their special problems, there are many aspects of this board and its activities that I might explore. However, let it suffice for me to say that I am proud to have this legislation come forward in my name, not only because of its importance to the Atlantic provinces and their people but because I know there are occasions when all members of this House of Commons are able and indeed I think are anxious to step beyond the bounds normally imposed on us by party affiliation. The proposals embodied in this resolution provide such an opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that in this instance we can act with one accord, and in so doing make it very clear that as members of this House of Commons our prime consideration is and always has been the needs of Canadians everywhere. I most earnestly commend this proposal to the favourable consideration of all hon. members; and at the same time may I express my belief—it is more than a hope; it is a belief—that this measure will indeed find acceptance in all corners of this House of Commons.

**Mr. Robichaud:** Mr. Chairman, all members of this House of Commons, I am sure, have listened with interest to the statement of the Minister of National Revenue. The resolution which has just been introduced by the minister provides for the establishment of an Atlantic development board with, as he said, specific duties to advise on measures and projects which will promote the economic development of the Atlantic provinces. In introducing a similar measure, but one which we could call more nation wide in its scope, a week ago today in this house the Minister of Finance stated that the so-called national economic development board would be concerned with all parts of Canada as well as with Canada as a whole. Its scope, said the Minister of Finance on that occasion, will be the three million square miles of this nation.

I express the hope that the measure now before the committee, which is similar in aims in its field of operation and achievements although more limited by geographical boundaries, will at no time enter into conflict with the national economic board which, as was stated by the Minister of Finance in introducing that particular measure, is designed to provide the soundest, most productive and most prosperous use of Canadian economic resources. I would hope that later on in this debate the Minister of National