

Atlantic Development Board Act

may be said: You have got the board, you have got \$100 million, what more do you want? In my opinion there is a real danger of that attitude developing as a result of the inclusion of a specific amount in the bill or what will, I presume, become an act.

Up to now I believe that generally throughout Canada there has been a very co-operative feeling toward the problems of the Atlantic provinces. I think all of us from that area recognize the fact that Canadians generally have been prepared to deal very fairly—I will not say generously—with the problems that have arisen there and they are still prepared to do so. Speaking for myself and for most of the people in the Atlantic provinces, I believe, may I say we would have preferred to have matters stand as they were and to be able to make our requests, our demands, shall I say, for specific action on specific problems and have them dealt with rather than to have the situation which is going to develop after this bill becomes an act of parliament.

One could go on and belabour the matter. I have almost a pet peeve at times these days and perhaps I could utter this thought. We have had suggestions made about depressed areas in the maritime provinces. Certainly they have not entirely kept pace with developments in Ontario or other parts of Canada, but I think all of us who come from the maritimes are rather proud of the fact that there has been substantial development in that area during the past few years. It has not been dramatic but it has been steady and it has continued.

The mere fact that in my own province of Nova Scotia 11 relatively large corporations have announced their intention to build capital plants there since January of this year, a period of roughly six months and 11 days, which plants in some cases involve the expenditure of millions and millions of dollars, has created a different atmosphere there. There is a different attitude. There is a development there which I think is commendable and which I think the people of Canada sometimes do not realize is taking place.

We have many other problems to solve. I am not saying for a moment that we have arrived at solutions for all of them. There will be requests for consideration with regard to individual facets but, generally speaking, whether in the coalfields, the steel industry or wherever it may be in the Atlantic provinces, there is an atmosphere of development and growth. This has come about because of the co-operation of all parties and all people. I hope it will continue and I hope that the passage of this bill, and making it an act of parliament, which pretends to offer

\$100 million as a solution to our problems, is not going to affect our development and growth.

I want to register my opinion at this time, and I am sure that it is the opinion of every responsible person from the Atlantic area. Undoubtedly, it is government policy to go ahead with this bill. I believe the Secretary of State said the other night that this was one of the pledges made prior to the election. The government is determined to carry out this policy and we are certainly not going to block or attempt to block the bill in any way, shape or form. But I do say we look upon it with some doubts, and we are sure that the people of Canada will not assume that the passage of this bill with the provision of a certain specific amount is a solution to the problems that still have to be dealt with in the Atlantic provinces.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Chairman, I begin by using that often uttered phrase: I had not intended to speak on this measure. However, I have a good reason for doing so, if one is necessary. I just lost my private member's motion, but I will not inflict upon the house anything that I was going to say on that motion. I do not object to the fact that it has been suspended until later in this session because I am all in favour of any move that will get us out of here this summer.

However, a great many of the members from the Atlantic provinces have spoken at the various stages of this bill, and I feel my silence might be taken as an indication of a lack of interest. I should like therefore, to mention one or two thoughts I have jotted down quickly. I made a small contribution to the debate on this measure when it was first introduced by the previous government. I put forward one or two thoughts about projects that might be undertaken, and I am pleased to note that one project has been undertaken. I refer to the investigation of winter navigation on the St. Lawrence. Last night the Secretary of State gave us assurance that there would be no diminution of this investigation. We were pleased to hear that, because it does hold some hope for the ports of Saint John and Halifax.

I disagree slightly with the hon. members for Victoria-Carleton and Digby-Annapolis-Kings, because I am not so excited about these changes in the bill. I really felt that we did not need to give that much attention to the bill when it was originally introduced by the Diefenbaker government, because the thought was there to help the maritimes. We all agree that it is a wonderful thing, and I believe that is the thought that needs emphasizing, that this is a measure introduced by the Conservative government. I think we have lost