

Atlantic Development Board Act

of this bill, we forget whether the previous government, which made a good start in this matter, should get the credit, or whether it should be the present government, which is trying to carry out to the letter what we promised the electors to do, for which we elected 20 members out of 33 members in the Atlantic provinces in the last election.

Surely if there is to be good faith in public life at all, when you give undertakings to people and they vote for you, you should carry out those undertakings. We gave two specific undertakings about this board. We said we would carry it on; we did not say we would abolish it. We said we would strengthen it, and I believe when hon. members see the kind of persons who will be appointed they will have no doubt that the board will have been strengthened. That is no reflection at all on the existing members. We also said it would be given a capital fund, if parliament approved of this, of course, and that is what we are asking parliament to do. I do not think there is anything more I need add to what I have already said, sir, and I thank all hon. members who have participated in the debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Is the house ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question is as follows: Mr. Pickersgill, seconded by Mr. Robichaud, moves that Bill No. C-80, to amend the Atlantic Development Board Act, be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Some hon. Members: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Lamoureux in the chair.

On clause 1—"Fund".

Mr. Fairweather: Mr. Chairman, clause 1 has to do with the establishment of the capital fund and I think this clause merits a little attention from the committee before it carries. A moment ago the Secretary of State spoke of the lost six years. By that reference he of course spoiled his usual non-partisan approach to matters of this type. Then, of course, he gave a moving and heart rending apology for not having been born in the Atlantic provinces. I found this so moving that it makes speaking difficult. All I can say is that I am as sorry as he that he was not born amongst us.

When one speaks of six lost years one reverts to the partisanship which makes all of us on this side of the house concerned about the future of the board. I am one of those who believe that many things were accomplished

between 1957 and 1963 which benefited the Atlantic provinces. But I agree with the Secretary of State that it is a futile effort to start cataloguing the various achievements, one side against the other. Therefore I am not going to bore the committee with any such catalogue. The capital fund is, of course, nothing more than, shall we call it a Pickersgillian exercise in words, because it has to be referred to the minister and then to parliament, which is exactly what the former statute would have had us do. But when we consider—

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, would the hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. Fairweather: I would be delighted.

Mr. Pickersgill: Did I understand the hon. gentleman to say it had to be submitted to parliament? That, of course, is not correct. The money is being voted in this bill and will be available to be spent on the approval of treasury board.

Mr. Fairweather: Mr. Chairman, I thank the hon. member for correcting me. Of course he has caught me out in an incorrect statement. It is the government, I meant to say. I sometimes confuse government and parliament. This is a backbench problem. Some writers, of course, have also discussed this question. There are other times when we can go into the philosophy of government and parliament. But while we are discussing the \$100 million fund I am going to make a statement that I think is entitled to be made quite emphatically. I promise not to catalogue. However, I am going to say that to the Right Hon. John Diefenbaker must go credit for giving this problem special recognition. It was the first time in the history of this country, and here I pay tribute to the other governments from confederation. He, for the first time as a government leader, recognized the special problem and faced this problem with special remedies. I was delighted to hear the Secretary of State say he is going on up the ladder; but the ladder was put there by the former government as a special means of assisting this area.

This was done, of course, by recognizing the basic facts of life with regard to the Atlantic provinces. The first was the compelling need for an abundant supply of electric power, and in the first throne speech of the former government there was contained the provision for this to be achieved. Then that phrase became a statute which permitted the loan to the Beechwood power development, and from there we went to the Atlantic Provinces Power Development Act. Right in my own constituency today I see evidence of the working of the power development