

*Atlantic Development Board Act*

proposals, whatever they may be, in substitution of the act of parliament by which we hold our appointments today.

I would draw attention to the next sentence, which reads:

Personal considerations have no place in our minds. We are ready and happy to serve in any capacity.

But this government decides that the man who is willing and anxious to work in any capacity shall be given a minimum of two years notice and told to get out. That is what it amounts to.

We are here, so far as this legislation is concerned, with one object in view—the betterment, improvement and advancement of all people in the Atlantic provinces. Surely this is conceded on all sides. The Liberals of New Brunswick and the Atlantic provinces have, I suggest, put partisan considerations ahead of the good of the Atlantic provinces by agreeing to these amendments. I think history will record that they are wrong if they think petty politics should be played at all times. In my opinion they will not—

**Mr. Robichaud:** We never played them.

**Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton):** Well, let us not get into that argument, because there are so many things about which I could remind my hon. friend from Gloucester—

**Mr. Robichaud:** And so could I.

**Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton):** —that we would get away from the subject matter of the Atlantic development board. The people of the Atlantic provinces will not forget the attitude of this government toward the Atlantic development board, which could be so important for improvement and progress. If they would only indicate interest in that phase instead of providing for its death and funeral, then it would have much more prospect of accomplishing what it was intended to accomplish. As I said, I hope an amendment will be prepared in connection with this particular phase of Bill No. C-80.

Some hon. members have said that the \$100 million is an amount which has been specifically put forward. Some hon. members have said, although the Secretary of State has not, that the \$100 million was the minimum. It can, of course, be increased, but the Secretary of State has not said it will. He has said that he cannot bind future parliaments to any additional amount. Someone on the government benches must tell us that the \$100 million is the amount just to get the board started; because if that amount of money is divided among four provinces over a period of six years only \$5 million per year per province is provided, which

[Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton).]

does not fill the bill or meet the situation at all. If the government really want to relieve the doubt existing in many people's minds the Secretary of State, I think, should not hesitate to sponsor an amendment to the effect that it shall not be less than \$100 million. Those words if inserted in the bill would be a tremendous improvement as far as we are concerned.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Could I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

**Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton):** Yes, indeed, though the clock keeps turning.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** How does he reconcile his earlier statement that he disapproved of a fund altogether with his present statement that he wants a bigger fund?

**Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton):** Just a minute; I think the Secretary of State qualifies under the heading of what is called a tricky debater. And that is said as a compliment. All I said was that the \$100 million should be the minimum and we should not be tied to that figure. May I remind my hon. friend from Gloucester that he was the man who stood here last autumn and asked where had the \$1 billion got to.

**Mr. Robichaud:** Where is it now?

**Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton):** We had it in the resources of Canada before the Minister of Finance got to work and brought in a \$700 million deficit last night. There is plenty to take care of all those commitments.

These are the three phases which I submit must be changed to some extent when we reach the committee stage on this bill. I want now to say a word or two in connection with some remarks made by the Secretary of State when he spoke last on this matter. He indicated that my hide, you might say, was a little too thin, and he said that I should not have got annoyed. He said, as reported on page 1317 of *Hansard*:

In those hopeful days in May or June of 1957, the spring of the great promises, they promised a capital projects program to provide federal capital assistance for provincial projects designed to enlarge the basic economy of the area. That was in 1957. Three elections later, in 1962, as a deathbed effort they produced the Atlantic development board bill, without any capital fund. We do not intend to follow that example.

He implied that in that period of time nothing had been done for the Atlantic provinces by the government of the day.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I did not imply any such thing. I hope the hon. gentleman does not want to misrepresent me. I merely said, and it is perfectly evident, that that promise had not been kept.