

Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys

be delayed further. We know that as from yesterday one mine in Cape Breton has closed its doors, that another one will close on July 1, and that a third one will close on August 31 next year. It was made very clear in the Rand commission recommendation that if closures had to take place, action should be taken by the government in order to take care of the miners who were displaced by such closures. I am not 100 per cent in favour of the recommendations of the Rand report. I agree that this is not the first time that coal mines have been closed. The dominion bureau of statistics weekly bulletin for March 10, 1961 has this to say:

Number of coal mines in operation in 1959 dropped to 133 from 158 in 1958,—

A drop of 25 in one year.

—employees to 11,485 from 13,162—

A drop of almost 2,000 in one year.

—and salaries and wages to \$37,123,000 from \$42,250,000.

A drop of almost \$5 million in the period of one year.

But the fact remains, Mr. Chairman, that some action should be taken to protect these miners who are being displaced and will be displaced by the closing of the coal mine. The position of the Liberal party was made clear in this house as early as July 1, 1958, by our leader when he recommended, as found at page 1807 of *Hansard* of that date:

(1) An intensive and comprehensive program of scientific and industrial research to find more uses for coal and help bring about expanded employment;

(2) Further measures to encourage greater production and marketing including more flexible uses of subventions to move coal to markets within and without the maritime area;—

The last recommendation was as follows:

(4) A specific and immediate plan of co-operation with the provincial governments to promote industrial enterprises to diversify the economy and increase employment opportunities.

This is a "must" if the areas affected by the closing of these coal mines are to be looked after. The government has received a number of recommendations. I have here a resolution from the Catholic clergy in the industrial area of Cape Breton with regard to the proposed closure of the coal mines. This was presented to the Prime Minister and to the premier of Nova Scotia. May I be allowed to quote just a few of the recommendations included in this resolution. The first reads:

In view of the particular economic situation in this area and of the general economic condition throughout Canada, it is imperative that if three mine closures must come, they should be staggered over a five or ten year period.

This is in line with the recommendation of the Rand commission and with the policies [Mr. Robichaud.]

which we have been advocating in this chamber since 1958. Further on the resolution states:

Because of the relationship between scientific resource development and industrial progress in this region, we strongly recommend the establishment of permanent research facilities for the three important industries of coal, forestry and fishing.

This again is in line with what we have been urging in this chamber for the last three years. Further on we find this recommendation:

Long term incentive legislation, to be established by the federal government for attracting secondary industry in the Atlantic region should receive determined support at all government levels.

Similarly, support should be given to the setting up of a capital projects commission for the Atlantic region.

The position of the Liberal party on this particular recommendation is well known. The last recommendation is as follows:

The improvement of our economic situation demands the utmost co-operation between labour, industry, the various levels of government and the public generally. To this end we pledge our entire resources and good-will. We strongly feel that there is hope for the future of this area, if these recommendations are implemented forthwith, but we also emphasize that this hope is seriously endangered by a policy of premature and drastic closures.

I have here the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*—

Mr. MacEwan: Will the hon. member permit one short question at this point?

Mr. Robichaud: Yes.

Mr. MacEwan: Can he advise the committee of the names of those who signed the resolution or the petition to which he referred?

Mr. Robichaud: I do not have here the signatures on the resolution, but a copy bearing signatures was presented to the Prime Minister and I think it has been referred to in this house in questions which were addressed to the Prime Minister asking if such a resolution had been received.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): What date was it?

Mr. Robichaud: I have not the date here but I know I can get it. The resolution has been presented and questions have been asked in the house. When I take my seat I think I can find out and give the minister the information.

I have the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* for Wednesday, May 31, in which we find the unfortunate news: "Displaced Miners Register with Unemployment Insurance Commission Tomorrow". That is the subheading which appears under the main heading: "Curtains for Caledonia". I will not refer to that part