

*Atlantic Development Board*

lower in the Atlantic provinces by more than a third; by capital investment per head, which is half that in the other provinces; or by the lack of opportunity which, measured by employment available, is much greater. Emigration from the maritimes has amounted to more than half a million since confederation, and continues. In the light of growing populations and the tendency toward mechanization, it would be rash to assume that the labour surplus from the Atlantic region could be absorbed in the rest of Canada in the years to come, even if it were considered justifiable as a national policy.

So I point out, Mr. Chairman, the need of addressing ourselves to the problem of creating job opportunities in our own region by developing our own natural resources, and then looking at the transportation problem and also paying some special attention to the possibilities of cultivating markets where we may have natural advantages compared with other parts of Canada by reason of our location on the Atlantic seaboard. The Atlantic development board will inquire into and report to the government suggesting measures with respect to projects which promise to accelerate the growth of the area's economy. It will consider and report after investigation on projects suggested by provincial governments and other parties. This is in accordance with the statement of the Prime Minister in April last.

The purpose of the Atlantic development board will be to suggest ways and means to improve conditions in the area so that it will be more attractive to industry. Many people believe that public investment to a more than average degree is necessary to create these conditions. I find myself in agreement with that concept. There are many policies, measures and projects which have been suggested as deserving urgent consideration by the board. A number of public works projects need immediate research. Among these are the Chignecto complex of canal, tidal power and industrial development; the causeway to link New Brunswick with Prince Edward Island, which has been accepted in principle and is in the planning stage. There is the development of the great manganese deposits in Carleton county, New Brunswick, and that of the immense deposit of ore containing a large percentage of tin in Charlotte county in that same province. Then marble comes to mind. In various parts of New Brunswick there are very impressive deposits of marble, some of which have been partially developed, but further expansion seems most desirable. Then I may mention that the base metal deposit near Bathurst is already under active development. The necessary steps are being taken

[Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton).]

and progress is being made. I do not suggest this as a project for the Atlantic development board; it is under way. I might remind the committee, however, that the quantity of proven mineral bearing deposits of lead and zinc is something in the order of 60 million to 100 million tons, one of the largest, if not the largest in the world.

A great deal of research has been carried out by the provinces themselves and by the Atlantic provinces economic council, which has been so strong an advocate of this board. Proposals have been made for assistance in the setting up of certain so-called cornerstone industries which, it is claimed, would be likely to create other industries. The board would have a responsibility for placing the many and varied proposals in their appropriate categories, forming judgments on them or obtaining judgment on them from government sources or from outside consultants. It would be responsible for presenting its recommendations to the government and co-ordinating the passage of projects approved through the federal departments which would be concerned with them.

In this connection, a few days ago there was a discussion in this chamber concerning the coal industry, and discussion regarding the development or further development of the existing steel industry in Cape Breton. Both these subjects might well be studied by the Atlantic development board. The expansion of existing industries is quite as attractive and desirable a source of investigation as the establishment of completely new employment creating industries.

I should like to think that the Atlantic development board can be an arm of the federal government to be consulted by the provincial governments and by industry in general with a view to rendering real assistance in every sector of the development of the region. We of the Atlantic provinces are all familiar with the success that has been achieved by the interconnecting grid system made possible by the action of the government of Prime Minister Diefenbaker since it assumed office, and concurred in by all members of the house in the passing of the legislation. There is at the moment a definite improvement in the supply and price of power for industrial purposes. Electrical energy from the upper Saint John river is available, in case of need, via the grid system to the Cape Breton area, a distance of approximately 700 miles from northern New Brunswick; and power based on coal generated in Cape Breton is available to that part of New Brunswick lying close to the Quebec border. I repeat, by means of the grid system, made possible by federal legislation presented to parliament by this government, we have this