

Supply—Regional Development

committee I said restrictions were placed on a miner taking early retirement. The chairman at that time said there were no restrictions. This is not the case. Restrictions are placed on any miner who goes on early retirement in that 50 per cent of anything that he earns over and above \$50 is applied against any funds he would receive on retirement. In other words, if he earns \$100 a month he can only keep \$75 and \$25 is applied against the payment he will receive on retirement. I think this restriction should be removed. Also I see no reason why miners who might retire early should subsidize this plan through the unemployment insurance program. If they are going to accept early retirement they should be entitled to their pensions and to whatever benefits they may have from unemployment insurance rather than have to subsidize pensions through payments to unemployment insurance.

● (3:50 p.m.)

With regard to job opportunities, I believe in all sincerity that the intention of the legislation was to provide alternative work in and around the mining communities affected. I do not see anything in any of the Devco reports concerning any developments by that corporation although there are many rumours concerning this throughout Cape Breton. I see nothing about their intended investment in an oil refinery in the Port Hawkesbury area, although action was supposed to have been taken in this respect. I have no objections to broadening the base of the economy of Cape Breton, but I want to emphasize again the fact that this legislation was intended to assist the mining communities. Here again I might say that the development of the oil refinery in the Port Hawkesbury area, despite the credit which some people may be getting for it, was done on the initiative of the present Leader of the Opposition when he was premier of Nova Scotia in 1958, at which time he made land deals with the British American Oil Company. I might also say that I have found it surprising that such action has been taken in this area by the Cape Breton Development Corporation when one considers the fact that B.A. has now been taken over by U.S. interests.

I am also surprised to hear, although I have nothing to substantiate this, that Devco has shown some interest in a possible investment in a Holiday Inn. Here again they are emphasizing the tourist trade, but I do not feel that the tourist industry provides Cape

Breton or the mining communities in that area with the incentives for which they were looking and the security which they expected to receive from this legislation. No one expected Devco to bring in industry which would replace the coal mines and only employ 500 or 1,000 men, but it was certainly expected that Devco would make an all-out effort to assist the suffering mining communities. Even though Devco may invest millions of dollars in the Cape Breton area, this possible venture cannot be expected to do anything to serve us in particular or to protect the mining communities involved.

Since the Minister of Manpower and Immigration is here may I remind him that during the last election campaign he indicated that a ski resort would be built in Cape Breton. I am all in favour of it but I do not think Devco should dip into funds provided by parliament to develop the economy of the mining communities of Cape Breton in order to build a ski resort which again will only serve the tourist industry. I think I can speak with some authority on this program. It is not a development which will do much for Cape Breton, and I fail to see how a ski resort can help to develop the Cape Breton tourist industry because it is a recognized fact that skiing cannot take place during what is regarded as the tourist season in our area.

I see no indication that the government intends to fully support the over-all plan put forward by Devco. I believe that the opening of the mine at Lingan, which was forcefully promoted by everyone involved in the mining industry over a period of years, has been brought to the minister's attention. The thought behind the promotion was that the opening of a mine at Lingan would provide coal operators with an opportunity to drastically reduce production costs. It was never intended that Lingan be opened for the purpose of closing down other mines operating in the area. At the time that Devco came forward with the over-all plan to open the Lingan mine, without any thorough study of the plan, I criticized that approach because they were going to close down other mines. Yet, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, who I hope will have something to say in this debate, indicated at that time that it was a wonderful thing and was a fulfilment of a promise he had made several years ago prior to another election. Since then it has been clearly indicated to him by the mining interests—and I might say here I am speaking of miners and unions—that they are not happy

[Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond).]