

Atlantic Development Board Act

will follow that cheap power. That is what we will get in the Atlantic provinces. Undoubtedly the Secretary of State is quite justified in his concept in that regard, and I certainly hope that what he has said will come to pass. A surplus of cheap power will always attract interest and investigation. I understand it is already arranged that a surplus of this power is to be sold to the United States. That is undoubtedly justified because we certainly could not handle an amount of that nature without some guarantee as to what was going to be done with it. I am intrigued very much by the fact that it may be in the not too distant future that work will be done on this very large development.

I should like to refer again to the words of the Secretary of State last evening, because I find myself in an area of disagreement. He said, as reported on page 2013 of *Hansard*:

I think the Atlantic development board is going to be concerned primarily with improving transportation, improving power and other facilities which would make an area more attractive to industry.

That is right and I agree with him; but some further remarks of his certainly do not represent my views at the moment. He went on:

Of the two—

that is, the development of smaller business and spending the fund—

—it is the more important. I do believe the fund is also needed because there are projects, as every hon. member can see for himself, that are not undertaken directly for a specific industry. I am not going to attempt to describe what they are because I know what would happen if I did; I would be accused of leaving this one or that one out of favouring one, and just get myself into a lot of unnecessary trouble and unnecessary debate.

That brings up the whole question of the consideration of this matter by this board from a regional rather than from a financial point of view. I am sure that his misgivings are justified in that respect because I think that if the board is to be successful it has to approach its duties from a regional point of view with the idea of benefitting the whole region. So I believe that the people who have something to do with it must of necessity forget provincial boundaries. In the final analysis I think it will be better for each province if they adapt themselves to that concept.

At the moment I think I have exhausted everything I wished to express at this time. No doubt the Secretary of State and other members will be speaking further on the bill, but I hope that the amendments that have been suggested with a view, I assure the hon. gentleman, to carrying out his avowed intention of strengthening the board will be

accepted with the idea in mind that they will strengthen and add something to it.

I said last December that in my opinion this was the most important single step that had been taken in my lifetime for the benefit of the Atlantic provinces. I am still of the same opinion. I am not completely discouraged because of the changes which are being made provided they seem to be made with the idea of really strengthening the board. I do not object to some election commitments being fulfilled as long as in the final analysis they do not impair the efficiency of the board itself. These are my comments at the moment. I hope that the Secretary of State will consider the amendments with a certain amount of care.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Chairman, I did not speak on the resolution stage or on second reading, and since my name has sometimes been closely associated with matters affecting the maritime provinces I might be a little bit afraid that if I did not appear on the record at all it would be assumed I had given tacit approval and consent to the bill. I do not want that misconception to be raised, so for a moment or two I want to speak very briefly on clause 1.

All I need to say is that I agree entirely with what my colleague, the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton, has said with respect to the bill. I think it is unnecessary. If not bad, in my opinion it certainly has very little good in it, and I believe we would have been just as well off if the bill had never been introduced at all. There are political overtones in the bill which certainly suggest to anyone who reads that the motive behind the introduction of the bill, as the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton said, was perhaps more to deal with the personnel of the board than to accomplish anything for the material benefit of the Atlantic provinces.

I do not like the capital sum named in the bill. One hundred million dollars is not an inconsequential amount but, as the hon. member said, if it is spread over a period of years it amounts to very little. I think I can say very definitely that so far as the political and commercial leaders in all the Atlantic provinces are concerned they would have preferred to see no specific sum whatsoever mentioned. In my view there is a real danger that, having put an amount in the bill, whether it be X dollars of \$100 million as set out, it might be looked upon as the old debtor did when he signed another promissory note and, having signed it, said, "Thank God that bill is paid". Having put an amount of \$100 million in the bill, I think there is a real danger that when requests are made for consideration of various matters of the greatest importance to the maritime provinces it