

*Atlantic Development Board Act*

industries to provide better opportunities throughout the region. But we also want new industry, especially secondary industry; and the board, if it is to be a real success, must stimulate these developments in all directions.

I could say a great deal more about what is hoped, and could make many more comments on the speeches made by other hon. members, but time is marching on. I just want to thank the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) for the interest he has taken in this area as a result of the urge from his ancestors. Even though he is a couple of generations away from the Atlantic area he is still interested, and it makes me feel that perhaps someone who was born in Ontario and brought up in Manitoba might still be reasonably acceptable in the Atlantic region, if he tries sufficiently hard. After all, it is not really my fault that I was not born there.

I feel a little like those several hundreds of thousands of immigrants that I encouraged to come to Canada when I was a minister in the previous Liberal government. I feel that someone who takes the trouble to go to an area and take an interest in it may be just as deserving of being given an equal chance as the people who were born there. This is not a special plea. I think the house knows I do not make many special pleas, but since the matter has been referred to, I do not think that I really need to apologize for occupying the position I occupy, after five general elections when I could have been thrown out of this house.

There was one other point mentioned that I think deserves a little special mention, and that is the date the act is supposed to expire. The reason that was put in the bill, as I said at the earlier stage, was that it was thought if a time limit was put on the operation of this legislation it would constitute an incentive to make a really big effort to try to do the job all at once; and this job was described, in November 1957, in words that I think ought to be put on *Hansard*. I am going to put them on *Hansard*.

There is, then, a need in the Atlantic provinces for considerable expenditures of capital on basic public facilities designed to encourage development of the resources of the region. These would include, but should not be limited to, the provision or reconstruction of adequate power and co-ordinated transportation services. The cost involved in providing these needed services, however, would seem to be beyond the financial competence of the provincial governments concerned. In view of this, we suggest that the federal government agree to contribute a substantial sum for capital projects in the Atlantic area to be spread over a relatively short period of years. The purpose would be to cover the costs of necessary capital investment, some or all of which would normally be the responsibility of the provincial governments. To this special contribution might be added during the specified period some or all of the considerable

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

sums now being spent in one or other of the Atlantic provinces each year by various departments of the federal government on such things as docks and wharfs, transportation including ferry and coastal shipping subsidies, the development of marshland areas and the construction of public buildings. The objective would be to co-ordinate all capital expenditures and subsidies in the area other than those on projects which are national in their scope and application such as the proposed land use classification scheme, the trans-Canada highway and assistance to people who are unable to make a reasonable living where they are and who wish to be relocated elsewhere. In this way, such capital expenditures, including the proposed capital grants, could be allocated in a co-ordinated manner designed to strengthen the basic economic structure of the area as a whole.

The expenditure of federal funds in this way should of course be made and supervised by an appropriate agency of the federal government. With this in mind, we suggest that the federal government establish a capital projects commission for the Atlantic provinces, or some other appropriate agency. We do not suggest that the proposed commission or agency be a permanent addition to the existing governmental machinery. On the contrary, we believe the needed facilities should be provided over a reasonably short period and that the capital expenditures involved should not be regarded as a permanent addition to the revenues of the Atlantic area. Accordingly, we suggest that when the proposed commission or agency is established it be given a limited life and be disbanded at the expiration of that time. However, inasmuch as some of the capital expenditures in question may be self-liquidating in whole or in part, it would be necessary to make provision for the continued administration of projects initiated by the commission or other agency.

I am not going to quote the whole of the extract, and I am sure all hon. members have guessed the author. The author was my hon. friend, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Gordon) when he was chairman of the royal commission on Canada's economic prospects. It is this pattern, this idea, that we need to infuse into this area, federal capital out of the federal treasury on a scale that is not needed in any other part of Canada—and I emphasize that: On a scale and of a scope not needed in any other part of Canada—to give a permanent lift to the area and to bring it closer to the level of the rest of the country. That was the reason why this whole project was conceived.

It was conceived six years ago by my hon. friend, the Minister of Finance, and the commissioners associated with him, and I am sorry we have lost those six years. I am sorry it was not done right away after that report was made, but there is no use worrying about what was not done or what was done in the past. I could refute a lot of the arguments made this afternoon, but I do not intend to, about who did this and when. It does not matter much to the people in the Atlantic provinces what was done. What they are concerned with is what is being done and what we are going to do in the future. I suggest that, for the rest of the consideration