

*Grants to Newfoundland*

fisheries. What did he do when he was a member of the government? What did Mr. Smallwood say? He said:

The whole policy of the Department of Fisheries of Canada, in so far as there appears to be a policy for Newfoundland, is to drive the fishermen away from fishing.

This is an article contributed by the premier of the province, speaking of those halcyon days when these two members of the opposition who speak so loudly and protest so vehemently, were in power. Then, Mr. Smallwood went on to say:

The present Minister of Fisheries told one very prominent Newfoundlander that it wouldn't matter if the Newfoundland fishermen had to leave the fisheries, because they could always find work in some other part of Canada.

There is the record of those who today criticize this government for bringing about, first, the payment of the amount recommended by the royal commission and, in addition to that, provided for a review in order to assure that the principles of confederation, of which the Conservative party has a real knowledge and a tradition, shall be carried into effect in so far as the last province to join confederation is concerned.

Then, I should point out also the payments that have been made under the Atlantic provinces grants and the tremendous effect that the \$7.5 million must have had on the economy of the province of Newfoundland and the other two provinces in the Atlantic area, and the \$2.5 million to Prince Edward Island. This is what the St. John's evening *Telegram* said on January 24, 1958:

The Conservative administration is supported by two representatives from Newfoundland. The other five are in opposition. But we are getting far more sympathetic attention now than we got from the Liberals. Not that the government at Ottawa is favouring us because we voted so overwhelmingly for the opposition, but because it has been the declared Conservative policy to devote a greater proportion of the revenue to provincial needs, and especially to the needs of the Atlantic provinces. All this is quite contrary to Liberal policy.

I might refer for a moment to something to which I alluded on another occasion, the attitude that has been taken by this government to the various provinces. I point out that since we came into power we have endeavoured to bring about an equalization of opportunity amongst the provinces. We have been endeavouring to do that in order to bring about and achieve that degree of equality without which confederation would be meaningless. I should like to deal, in so far as conditional grants and unconditional grants are concerned, with the province of Newfoundland. I point out that from 1949 on, and prior to 1957, unconditional grants payments to the province of Newfoundland,

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

in the highest amount in any one year, were \$20,106,000 in 1952-53. You talk about discrimination against Newfoundland. Let me point out this, that in 1957-58 the payment was \$19,244,000, and for 1958-59 it will be in the neighbourhood of approximately twice that amount.

Then so far as conditional grants are concerned, from the time Newfoundland came into confederation, the highest payment that was made was in 1956-57 and it amounted to \$6,573,000. For the first full year after this government came into office, the amount was \$14,576,000, and it will be approximately the same amount in 1958-59, counting in, as my hon. friends says, the payments to which I have already made reference.

Talk about discrimination and unfairness; let me point out this fact. In addition to that, there were developments in Terra Nova national park; the tremendous development in St. John's harbour; joint housing developments; winter works program and the contribution to the construction of highways, 269 miles in Newfoundland. Those things were not peculiar to Newfoundland but they did bring, not only for Newfoundland but throughout Canada, new opportunities for the provinces to discharge their responsibilities and thereby assure individuals within each of the provinces a new vista in the future.

In so far as provincial governments are concerned, the direct federal contribution to Newfoundland has increased approximately twice in amount since this government came into power. All these things are indicative of the attitude that we adopt, which is not one of discrimination, as was suggested against the province of Newfoundland but rather the realization that whatever the political complexion of any province may be, that province shall not—as was sometimes the case in the past—be unfairly treated in any way.

A moment ago I mentioned some of the developments in that province. I neglected to mention as well the Gander development that has taken place and has been completed under this government.

**Mr. Chevrier:** It was started by us.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** They started some things, Mr. Speaker; but we completed this and many other things.

I come to the general question of our attitude toward Newfoundland. Our attitude is this. We believe that province is entitled to fair and reasonable consideration. We believe that by 1962—and we have incorporated our belief in the statute—there should be that review which, ever since the findings of the royal commission, has been demanded by the government of Newfoundland. When that