

The Address—Mr. D. MacInnis

coverage for those not covered in sections 18(a)(1) and 18(a)(2), and the same privileges are available, or should be available, and according to the minister's letter are available, should Devco officials such as Blackmore, who has finally been removed, make such an application on behalf of these employees. There has been no effort in this regard.

I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. I could refer to the fact that the president of the Cape Breton Development Corporation has made the following statement:

Gentlemen, I recognize that the pre-retirement leave plan is wrong and I intend to do something about it.

That is from the responsible officer, the president of the Cape Breton Development Corporation. I will repeat it for the benefit of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) if he will just pay attention to me for a moment. Would the Minister of Finance please pay attention to this one statement by the present president of the Cape Breton Development Corporation? I quote:

Gentlemen, I recognize that the pre-retirement leave plan is wrong and I intend to do something about it.

Well, he did. A year ago last November he changed it around. It will be recalled that I said originally the Cape Breton Development Corporation leave moneys were not considered as earnings under the U.I.C. and that therefore they took 100 per cent of the men's U.I.C. benefits and subsidized their own retirement, in violation of section 48 of the Unemployment Insurance Act. So it has been changed around; Mr. Kent has changed it around. He said, "We are going to pay it all to you now and it is going to be considered as earnings."

I have had this out with the commissioner of U.I.C. and he said that it was part of the contract of service. He told me that they only get part of the U.I.C. benefits now, whereas they were getting it all when Devco was using it. Now they get only a portion. I ask you, why did they stop paying the men U.I.C. benefits? The answer I received was that they have a contract of service, and I suggested that they have a contract of service which is subject to recall. The commissioner agreed. He said they have to consider the merits. I am sure hon. members will agree that that is a strange thing. That contract of service has been in the retirement leave plan since its inception. It has been there ever since its inception, and I say they cannot now turn around and say it should be considered as earnings, because they took 100 per cent of the men's insurance benefits and used them.

I could go further and quote from page 29 of the sixth report of the justice and legal affairs committee in which a responsible officer of Devco admitted to the use of coercion. It is right there in the committee report. When questioned by a member of the committee, he responded by admitting they had used coercion. Is this the type of justice the government had in mind when they set up the Cape Breton Development Corporation Act?

I have said before—and I invite members to check this in *Hansard* by referring to the report of April 15, 1969; anybody is free to mark down the date and check it—that the plan was not legally set up. The House leader at that time reported that the government had approved the plan. At that time I brought to the attention of the Chair that I had been in contact with Treasury Board; on April 15,

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

1969, Treasury Board had not only not approved it, and on April 15 they had not even heard of it.

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Yes; and this House was told that it had been approved. And Blackmore went about the country in Cape Breton and told the people that the government had approved this. He forced the plan down their throats. The effect was to put men on the street at the age of 60; in fact, it put men on the street before the age of 60, against their will.

Then on April 16, 1969, the minister then responsible for the department, in answer to a question by the leader of the New Democratic Party, reported to this House that Treasury Board would probably give approval the following day. So that would take it to at least April 17. They imposed; they used coercion; they lied. Yes, they lied. I think the government would be well advised to call Mr. Blackmore back from western Canada before he ruins the coal industry there. That is all he did in Cape Breton. He closed mines despite the fact that evidence was given before the committee that no mine would be closed until alternative work was provided outside the coal industry, a requirement in the preamble to the legislation. They put the men on the street but they failed to provide alternative employment. In fact, a report came to the House that on February 5, 1970, there were 1,200 miners working in the new mine at Lingan. For the benefit of hon. members I will tell them what was going on in that new mine on February 5. A construction crew was just removing sod. However, on that date they were on strike and there was not a wheel turning at the new mine at Lingan. So there were not 1,200 men working.

If further proof is required that Mr. Blackmore was doing a snow job at the expense of members of this House, documents are available to me. In addition, I have the evidence from the public accounts committee which will further support my statement. Then there is the evidence which was placed before the committee on regional economic expansion. This would further substantiate the fact that all Mr. Blackmore did was to impose his will upon the people of the area and lie to his minister. If he had not lied to his minister, the miners in the Cape Breton area would not be faced with the situation they face today. They would not be receiving one-cent cheques—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. It being 9.30 o'clock p.m., it is my duty in accordance with section 4 of Standing Order 41, to interrupt these proceedings and forthwith put the question to the House.

• (2130)

The question is on the amendment. Is the House ready for the question? Those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Those opposed to the amendment will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.