

Supply—Mines and and Technical Surveys

had been implemented at once they would have provided work. This government cannot make up their minds to do anything about those problems. They cannot decide even to do something that would do them great credit if they would only do it.

I say, sir, that while we should seek in every possible way, by the diversion of government purchases, by assistance in any kind of useful works to provide a stopgap, I do not think any of us, having in mind the history of Nova Scotia, and having in mind the position of Cape Breton island, can placidly contemplate the steady decay of that old industrial complex there. Surely we have enough energy and enough public initiative, if there is not enough private initiative for it, to get some secondary industry established there and provide some real incentives to do it.

Mr. MacInnis: You never did.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. gentleman says that we never did. We made a proposal in 1957, and if it had been carried out in the form in which it was made it would have provided for the consumption of a very considerable quantity of coal which is now being consumed in the dominion, because our proposal was that those thermal plants should be owned by the federal government and not by the provincial governments or power companies, and the federal government could have afforded for a number of years to bear the carrying charges to operate them if necessary at a loss in order to give a stimulus to the region. But what happened? For reasons which I have never been able to understand, the premiers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick first accepted that proposal enthusiastically and then changed their minds and said they did not want it that way. They wanted those plants to be provincially owned. What happened in New Brunswick? The thermal plant does not use coal at all. The Minister of Forestry, who was then the premier of that province, notwithstanding this great coal problem, allowed them to use oil instead. This is what this government has contributed to the solution of this problem in that particular respect. It is true the Trenton plant has been completed but nothing more has been done.

The hon. gentleman asked for suggestions. I have another suggestion. I suggest that for a period of years the federal government should agree to provide electricity at no cost for a number of secondary industries in Cape Breton.

Mr. MacInnis: Walter Gordon would not go for it.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am suggesting—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): Order. I regret to inform the hon. member that his

time has expired. He will have another opportunity at another time.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Chairman, I have been very interested in the remarks of the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, and particularly in the remarks of the aspiring leader of the C.C.F.-New party group or whatever they wish to call themselves, because I could take both of them down into the constituency of Bow River and show them a graveyard in which they erected the stones in reference to the coal mining industry. If they had listened on July 25, 1955 to the then leader of the Conservative party, Mr. Drew, the coal mines of western Canada might not be in the mess they are in today.

I should like to have had the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate campaigning in the Bow River constituency in 1957. The Liberal party had an outstanding candidate, a man of integrity, from Acme, Alberta, campaigning in that riding and he was not able to collect together enough people in the coal mining areas to fill a clothes closet because they were entirely deserted by the former administration. The reason he was unable to get together a small group was that the former government did nothing for the coal mining industry in western Canada. As early as—

Mr. Pickersgill: What have you done about it?

Mr. Woolliams: The hon. member did not leave me much time, but if he will just bear with me I will tell him. I hope he will attend the House of Commons tomorrow because he will then see that we were able to get a market for 500,000 tons of coal—this is my answer to the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate—in Japan, a great new market, to give men and women in the province of Alberta jobs which they did not have when this government took office.

Resolutions adopted in committee of supply this day reported and concurred in.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder whether the house leader could confirm the business for tomorrow and Saturday and give us any indication he is able to for next week.

Mr. Churchill: The indication of the business for next week will be given, I hope, tomorrow night. For tomorrow we will carry on with the estimates of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, followed by secretary of state, followed by fisheries. If these three are concluded, then the Department of Public Works.

At 10.30 p.m. the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to special order.