

Atlantic Development Board Act

I come finally to the question of the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. MacInnis). I cannot, of course, disclose what Dr. Donald has advised the government. But I can say, and say with the most complete confidence, that a great deal more than \$25 million will be spent for the industrial development of the coal mining regions of Nova Scotia. There is no question whatever but that we must grapple with this very serious problem. I certainly will not be satisfied, and I know my hon. friend the Minister of National Health and Welfare will not be satisfied and I do not believe any member of this government will be satisfied, until we have an industrial capacity in Cape Breton Island that will make the situation there better than it is now or than it has been for a long time. There are some very encouraging signs now of developments already underway.

Mr. Douglas: Before the minister leaves that point could I ask him a question? When he says that a great deal more than \$25 million will be spent in that area, could he be more specific? Will the \$25 million be spent in the development and extension of the coal industry as was suggested by the Minister of National Health and Welfare in Cape Breton?

Mr. Pickersgill: There is no question that more than \$25 million will be spent in an effort to provide employment. How that will be spent and the precise manner in which it will be spent I do not say. The hon. gentleman was the head of a government for quite a long time, and I am quite sure that he remained head of that government by working out his policies before he announced them. I think it is a sound rule and it is the rule I intend to follow.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Does that rule apply to the Minister of National Health and Welfare?

Mr. Pickersgill: It is just another bit of prudence.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I would ask the minister whether that rule is in any way in conflict with the announcement made by the Minister of National Health and Welfare some time ago?

Mr. Pickersgill: The Minister of National Health and Welfare made an announcement that will be carried out. I can assure hon. members that there was nothing said by the Minister of National Health and Welfare which is not in complete and total accord with the policies of the government at the present time.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

An hon. Member: We have your word for it.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): I assume that the recommendations of the Donald Commission have already been circulated and, whether those recommendations are authentic or not, I take it that the government is determined to ignore them.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member may draw any conclusions he likes from anything he has read, but he cannot draw any conclusions from what I have said—

Mr. Douglas: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pickersgill:—other than what I have said. As every politician knows, it is very easy to distort other people's words and to say that other people have said something different from what was said.

● (4:50 p.m.)

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): On a question of privilege, I had no intention of distorting the minister's words. If the minister will look at his own words he will find he said that the government has every intention of carrying out the conditions laid down by the hon. gentleman who was then minister of labour with respect to the \$25 million grant for the coal industry. The minister now states it is the government's intention to back up the statement of the former minister of labour. What other interpretation can I place on his remarks other than that the circulated reports of the Donald coal commission are to be ignored?

Mr. Pickersgill: This is a perfect example of what I was saying. I was saying that if anyone wanted to scrutinize the words actually used by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, not the words attributed to him but the words he actually used, it would be found that they represent the position of the government. I am not responsible, nor is he, for interpretations which others place on his words. Perhaps when we get into committee—

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): One more question. Would the minister care to come to my office and listen to the tape?

Mr. Pickersgill: I can answer that shortly. The answer is, no.

If these diversions are over, I should like to make one final observation. It is about the sum of money which is to be paid into the fund under the terms of this bill. Yesterday and again today there was some suggestion it was not large enough. The hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam expressed this view. I