

Atlantic Provinces Power Development

the minister responsible for negotiating with the province of Nova Scotia, to maintain and expand the power plant in that area.

That is all I wish to say on second reading except to reiterate our support for the bill, to congratulate the minister on carrying forward the ideas of the previous government and to express the hope that the reduction in power costs that will be made possible under this legislation will assist in the industrial development of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and whatever other provinces may be affected. We know that in that area our industrial development has not been as rapid as in other parts of Canada. We suffer from disabilities in the form of distance from markets, transportation costs and limited resources. Sometimes we have succeeded in gaining governmental recognition of these disabilities.

Now we are having a further recognition of our incapacity to provide power at cheap rates. We hope on this side that this measure will have the effect of reducing power costs for industrial purposes substantially and will act as a compensating factor to induce industries to settle in that area because our objective is not to seek special advantages or privileges for one of the oldest parts of Canada but to be given conditions and circumstances by which we can compete favourably and successfully with other parts of Canada in the economic expansion of the future.

The provinces of Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland are other areas that are deserving of consideration under this measure. It must be little consolation to the province of Newfoundland to realize that this measure deals exclusively with thermal power plants while their need is exclusively for hydro power development. Certainly the demands of Newfoundland will not be met until a flexible program is developed that will permit them to develop their hydro resources in terms comparable to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Finally, I trust that Prince Edward Island will be speedy in presenting its claim for assistance for thermal power plants to be driven by coal from the west coast of Cape Breton.

Hon. W. J. Browne (Minister without Portfolio): Mr. Speaker, as the representative from Newfoundland in the cabinet I should like to make a few remarks at this stage, probably in anticipation of what my hon. friends representing constituencies in Newfoundland may have to say. I have had the benefit of their observations at a previous stage of the bill and I think I know something about conditions in Newfoundland. I believe I can share their first feelings when they read

the resolution because I feel they did not thoroughly appreciate the advantages that Newfoundland will gain by this measure and did not sufficiently appreciate conditions as they exist at the present time.

Hon. members from Newfoundland will agree with me when I say that the power plants of Newfoundland are operated by private companies. We have the Newfoundland Light and Power Company in St. John's, and on the west coast; they have hydroelectric plants in several places. As the minister has stated, they have an oil-fired steam generated electricity plant in St. John's which he has told the house they are prepared to expand. We have the United Towns Electric Company.

Mr. Pickersgill: I did not catch what the hon. gentleman said about the thermal plant at St. John's.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): There is a thermal plant which the privately owned company is prepared to expand. They are developing more power. We have the Wabana Light and Power Company on Bell Island. We have the Union Light and Power Company in Port Union in the constituency of the hon. member for Trinity-Conception (Mr. Stick). We have the new development that took place in the last two years in the constituency of Bonavista-Twillingate.

Mr. Stick: No, it is in my district.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): I discussed it with the hon. member for Trinity-Conception and he did not seem to think it was in his district.

Mr. Stick: I think a correction is necessary here. When I mentioned it I said that it was in my constituency and I also said that it supplied power to Bonavista-Twillingate. Let us get that straight.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): The plant is at Lockston, Trinity bay. On the west coast we have the newly formed Bowater's Electric Power Company which was formed last year and which is capable of great expansion. I believe there are two or three other plants, but all of them are privately owned and there is no power commission operating any plants in Newfoundland. There is, therefore, that distinction between Newfoundland and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Hon. members on the other side of the house, particularly the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate (Mr. Pickersgill) who was a member of the previous government, know that the projects contemplated by the bill which are of prime concern to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have been under consideration for some years, that a report was made by the