

*Cape Breton Development Corporation Act*

to the chairman. There is a new chairman of the Board. The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond says he has confidence in Mr. Cameron. I believe he is right because I also have confidence in Mr. Cameron. It might be the first time that we agree, since I have been sitting in the House. We will let Mr. Cameron act, because he has some authority on the board of directors of the Corporation. If the vice-president ever behaves like the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond suggests, Mr. Cameron, whom he trusts, will also become aware of it.

Then, what do we do? A minister is asked to dismiss someone when it is a well-known fact that he does not have the authority to do so. Evidently, nobody, not even the members of the opposition, except the member concerned, would approve if I were to dismiss the vice-president of a Crown corporation solely on the opinion of the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond. I am rather allergic to those personal attacks. If there are grievances, we could consider them. Most of those he raised this afternoon are unjustified and unfair for those concerned.

I shall point out another injustice. The member for York South (Mr. Lewis), whose intelligence and knowledge of the sector cannot be questioned, told the House that Devco had done nothing in Cape Breton, that it was a "complete failure". This is a serious accusation. He claimed that many of those who worked in this corporation, who are absolutely honest and whose beliefs are similar to those of some opposition members had accomplished nothing in two years. According to him, that was the summary of the government policy in Cape Breton Island, through the Devco Corporation.

In my opinion, this kind of accusation is serious.

One might well say that with the means that were available to Devco, the company could have done better. In point of fact, it did not manage well enough in the area of development. Its achievements as mentioned in its report, were not sufficient, something I can very well understand. But what I do not understand is the statement of the member for York South who says that we have done nothing for the miners and the people of Cape Breton.

Let us consider the facts, even if it is sometimes tedious. Of course, it is less exciting than talking of the exploitation of miners, because that is undoubtedly exciting. One can

talk of the plight of the miners, of their difficulty to make a living, of that part of their lives they spent down in the mines. I, too, can make this kind of speech; indeed, I have all my life, and this is what is easiest. But what is difficult is to know the facts, and when you have a research staff at your disposal, it seems to me that it is imperative to do so. Now what are the facts? I shall quote only a few of them, not to report on the work of Devco, but only to draw attention to the fact that we have here a gratuitous assertion which I am not prepared to accept from a responsible, intelligent man who is able to check the facts. What has Devco done in the field of development? I can quote here a few of its achievements. Thanks to Devco the Nova Scotia Pulp, for instance, has developed to an extent which would not have been possible without Devco.

• (8:40 p.m.)

And what does it mean? That at least 1,000 jobs have been generated in the area. People should know that.

Devco has attracted a strontium development company to the area, thus creating employment for 125 persons. An electronic products manufacturing company employs 150 people, thanks to Devco. Gulf Oil has settled down in the Canso strait area, again thanks to Devco. The corporation helped them and made the necessary efforts to make it happen.

The Hustler Company, which is engaged in manufacturing dashboards for trucks, has 175 employees. They caused an apartment building to be erected. This can be criticized, as the hon. member for York South did this afternoon. There is nothing in the Bible that says that people must necessarily build hotels. It is easy to yield to demagoguery by saying that miners do not stay in hotels. That is the easy part. It is more difficult to find technicians when no adequate housing can be offered to them. That is debatable. However, some 1,700 jobs have been created more or less directly by Devco.

That Company had been asked by the House to progressively eliminate work in the coal mines. That is spelled out in the act. However, Devco was asked to find employment for the miners or to find some way to give them a pension. Has Devco endeavoured to carry out this task? They have succeeded in doing something that the miners understand. The miners do, but not the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond—

[Mr. Marchand (Langelier).]