

*Atlantic Development Board Act*

members are expected to undertake this very important and serious task as a part-time activity. We regret that the government has not seen fit, although during the resolution stage the Secretary of State said he would be ready to consider proposed amendments, to consider the suggestion that we made that at least some of the members of the board should be on a full-time basis. Then this board would not be needed on an occasional basis, but as a regular, full time occupation.

The other step that is taken by the bill before us is to provide for a fund. We think that is a step forward, and an important one. We have already indicated our view that the amount of \$100 million is inadequate. However that may be, it is well that this board should have authority in its planning to spend money, and have money allocated for this purpose. We welcome that.

The hon. member for Victoria-Carleton (Mr. Flemming) took what to me appeared to be a very strange attitude. He said the improvements in this bill are very small, but it should not be improved at all. He said, in effect, "We brought it in, and it has not been properly tried out; therefore no one should try to improve it." I fail to follow that point of view. Of course, one can differ as to whether the proposed changes are in fact improvements, but the theory he advances that this government should not attempt to improve on the efforts of its predecessor seems to me a very remarkable one to advance in this house. I certainly could not agree with that particular theory.

I said I would speak for only three or four minutes and I shall, therefore, try to live up to that promise. We think that this is a hesitant and inadequate step forward; but, hesitant and inadequate though it may be, we think we should get on with it. We should pass this bill and let the board try to do its job. If in a few years it is seen that because of a lack of a full time board or because of a lack of adequate funds, the real job of planning the economic future of this very important section of Canada is not being adequately undertaken, then the matter can be and should be reviewed. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, we will support the principle of this particular measure.

**Mr. Richard Cashin (St. John's West):** I have listened with a certain amount of interest, and perhaps even a little amusement, to some of the remarks made during the course of the debate on the matter now before the house. The latest comment we have heard has been from this far corner of the house. Of course, I do welcome support from the corner to my right, but I would say it is very easy for my hon. friends in that party to criticize because

they have never enjoyed, if that is the correct word, the responsibility of governing the country. And I think it is highly unlikely that they ever will.

However, I do share their attitude towards some of the remarkable things that have been said by my hon. friends in the official opposition. I noted that the closing remarks of one Conservative speaker this afternoon followed the traditional Conservative pattern of looking over the shoulder, looking backward. When they were in opposition six years ago they talked about the Liberal government, and when they became the government they still talked for six years about the 22 years of Liberal rule. Now that they are in opposition again, they continue to talk about those 22 years. No doubt there may have been one or two shortcomings during those 22 years, but in their first couple of minutes talking about them the opposition must have exhausted all the shortcomings. Yet they continue to reiterate them day after day, year after year. The result is that such talk has ceased to be annoying and has become amusing.

With regard to the measure before us, I think we might be a little too optimistic in putting a deadline of 1969 on the life of the board. It may well be that when 1969 comes around we will find it has not accomplished all we expected it to, or alternatively we will find it has accomplished those things but that other things have arisen in the interim that should properly come under its jurisdiction.

Boards such as this, and our approach to what is generally regarded as planning, are relatively new to this country. But in the course of years we may find this to be a very useful exercise, and the role of the board in the economic life of eastern Canada may assume larger proportions than we now imagine, so that it should become a permanent part of the life of the Atlantic provinces. If this board is to do all we hope it will, it may have to play things a little by ear.

**Mr. Graftey:** Like the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Cashin:** I am always very glad to hear interjections from the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graftey). He is one of the more entertaining members of the house, and I am only too pleased to relegate the drone of my voice to the background, thus making way for his.

As I have said, planning is relatively new in Canada, and I hope as time goes by we may find it a very useful development. It would be wise for the board and the government to look closely at what has taken place in other countries which have similar boards. It would be a good idea for members of the board to acquaint themselves with similar activities in Europe. In such a