

Atlantic Provinces Power Development

by the hon. member for Queens (Mr. Macquarrie) and it is perhaps fitting that I should follow him in this debate since my constituency is just across the Northumberland strait from his, we are close to one another, and next summer one of the fine ferries which were built in my constituency will ply between the two points, Wood island and Caribou, and also because many of the people of Prince Edward Island who have fine Scottish blood in their veins originally came from my constituency of Pictou as did the ancestors of the hon. member, I believe.

This bill will be of vast assistance to the coal industry whether the coal is taken to Prince Edward Island from the constituency of the hon. member for Inverness-Richmond (Mr. MacEachen), or from my own county or from any part of the province of Nova Scotia and I will support any measure which will give Prince Edward Island the power which it requires.

In my own constituency there are a number of coal mines. The measure which has been introduced by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Hamilton) will bring a welcome measure of relief to the coal industry and I commend him most highly on this fine piece of legislation. The coal mines in this area sell much of their coal for power purposes. The coal which is presently being mined there is not of the very best quality and much of it is sold to the local power commission in the constituency. There are three coal mines now in operation, the Drummond mine, a small operation, the Greenwood Coal Company operation and the MacBain mine which is run by the Acadia Coal Company, a subsidiary of the Dominion Steel and Coal Company.

In his statement of January 8, as recorded at page 2039 of *Hansard*, it was pointed out by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources that one of the objects of this legislation was to give:

—an incentive to buy, produce and deliver coal of good quality for the production of the cheapest power possible in the Atlantic region.

In our area we have an untapped seam of coal of the very best kind which could be sold in any market and the development of it will certainly be helped out by this legislation. It is hoped this Black Diamond seam can be opened up and used, with the coal of the other mines I have mentioned, as a means of assisting the failing mining industry in the area.

As we all know, the principal object of the legislation is to provide low cost power to the Atlantic provinces. In this regard we

[Mr. MacEwan.]

have in my constituency, if I may be permitted to refer to it once again, various types of industry. There is the local steel works where axles are made for railway cars and various other types of steel construction. There is the Eastern Car Company which makes rolling stock, freight cars for our railways and which has lately been taken over by Avro which took over control of the Dominion Steel and Coal Company operation. It is our hope that under the new crown company in Nova Scotia, Industrial Estates Limited, we will be able to induce new industries to come to the province and our own area. I submit that in view of the fact that the use of domestic coal is decreasing it must be used for industrial purposes in the maritime provinces.

The cost of power is an extremely important factor with regard to inducing new industries, especially in relation to thermal plants where the cost of fuel is a significant factor. With the subvention outlined in this bill I know we will be able to provide the low cost power necessary for industries.

We have a surplus of coal miners in our area many of whom have actually adopted different trades. It has been proven that they can turn their hand to any type of work. No industry need worry about coming into the area because we have excellent workers there.

I was not in the house when the resolution was introduced because I was absent attending to committee work but I read carefully in *Hansard* the discussion that took place at that time and I noted that there was a great deal of talk and argument about who was responsible for instituting this program. All I can do at this time is to cite the old Latin maxim, *res ipsa loquitur*, the thing speaks for itself. The question of who considered the proposal is not significant; who presented it is the most important thing.

Mr. Pickersgill: That was the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet (Mr. Lesage).

An hon. Member: Be quiet, jumping jack.

Mr. MacEwan: I wish now to point out something else that was mentioned by the minister in his statement on January 8 as reported on page 3039 of *Hansard*:

I should add, Mr. Chairman, that the subvention will not be restricted to thermal plants operated by power utilities or commissions but would also be paid to industrial plants producing thermal power for their own use and for sale.

This is important in the province of Nova Scotia. One of the largest industrial plants is operated by a company known as the Nova Scotia Light and Power Company which is not actually a provincial power commission. In regard to that I should like to quote briefly