

*Atlantic Development Board Act*

aid up to now has not been given to individual firms by the Atlantic Development Board. They are working in slightly different fields but, of course, to the same broad end.

**Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South):** Would the minister permit a question?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Yes.

**Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South):** The minister has indicated that one of the criteria for establishing designated areas is unemployment. He referred to the fact that the criteria for designated areas are the same across Canada. Would he not agree that they are so rigid as not to produce the desired results in the Atlantic region? How can the minister equate the idea of unemployment as a criterion for designated areas right across the country and at the same time go into the maritime areas and tell the people there that everything is going better in Canada and in the maritimes than ever before? I indicated to the minister that the criterion of unemployment on an across Canada basis is not producing the desired results in the maritime area simply because it is the same throughout the country.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I do not accept the hon. gentleman's premise at all. I do not propose to debate this subject as it has nothing to do with the bill before us. I merely want to point out that the broad objectives of economic and industrial development are the same but the method of arriving at each particular area of operation is different in the two cases. I do not think that co-ordination could possibly be closer than it is. I think that those people in the Atlantic provinces who have followed the work of the board and the Department of Industry closely will admit that very readily indeed. I could, if we did not want to get on with our legislation, give many examples.

I should now like to say a word or two about what was said by the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire). He, it seems to me, gave the best possible reply to the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. He pointed out the need for industrial development and economic advancement in certain parts of the province of Quebec, including the area he represents. We acknowledge this. It is a designated area. Some hon. members are not ready to accept our designated areas as such. But if we simply abolished the criteria for different designated areas, then the whole country would have to be designated. That is the

problem and it is not easy of solution. I am not saying that our solution is perfect; I am not saying it will not be improved. But I say that if you are going to designate areas across the country you must have some way of designating one area as distinct from another; otherwise the whole idea is meaningless. I appreciate what has been said and I realize the difficulties.

The Leader of the Opposition said a few things about transport that encouraged me very much. The right hon. gentleman referred to my conversion with respect to views he had expressed about a railway in Alberta and the Northwest Territories, the first railway that ever went into the Northwest Territories.

I admit that the right hon. gentleman gambled and his gamble now looks pretty good. I admit it. But I am also very pleased at his conversion because in 1958 the party I belong to went to the country advocating a trunk road program for the four Atlantic provinces and we said we would undertake to pay 90 per cent of the cost of completing the trans-Canada highway. Unfortunately for the Atlantic region itself we had no chance to carry out that program until 1963. We lost no time when we got into office in 1963. The promised 90-10 formula was put into effect and the trans-Canada highway is completed across Newfoundland. Progress of that highway is not moving fast enough to suit the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. MacEwan), but the highway is moving across Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Since this government came into office \$30 million, in addition to what is directly in the Atlantic Development Board fund, has been devoted to assistance in a trunk road program throughout the entire four provinces. I do not think it is going to be enough but it has not yet all been spent. Everything is moving ahead quite rapidly. Moreover, taking the suggestion of the MacPherson Commission, which did a very solid job in my view but which did not deal, as the right hon. gentleman will recall, with the special problems of the Atlantic provinces, we have now under way a comprehensive study which we have discussed in detail with the four provincial governments, by a joint venture of the "Economist" unit and the Acres Company in regard to the transport needs of the whole Atlantic region. I do not think anything is more important to the economic advancement of the area than providing good transport. That is more important even than power development.