

Statement on Minas Basin Project

rence Seaway which is still a charge on the public purse? Yet this is another project which has been of benefit to all Canadians—perhaps it has benefitted us on the east coast least of all, but we agreed to it nevertheless because it was undertaken for the good of Canada. Then again, would immediate technical and economic considerations have justified Premier Bennett going ahead with the Peace River project? Today, we can see what this project has meant in so many ways for the benefit of British Columbia. If Premier Bennett had thought in that way, we might never have had the Peace River project. The experts said it could not be built at the cost assigned to it. The politicians said it could. The experts said that if it was, indeed, possible to build it, the power could not be sold because there would be no market. Yet already still more power is needed in British Columbia.

Speaking as a politician, but also as a concerned Canadian, I ask whether the concern so often expressed about area of economic disparity is to be only a phrase used at election times, and whether the sincere efforts of the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand)—I am not complaining about the minister—

An hon. Member: Why not?

Mr. Nowlan: This project could be the basis for a measure of economic development in the Atlantic area more important than all the piecemeal schemes and patchwork efforts of all the ministries concerned, both in the immediate future, to use the minister's own phrase, and for many years afterward.

If there is any doubt about the need for additional power supplies by the northeast of this continent, one has only to look at page 14 of the report. I intend to take some time reviewing the minister's statement, Mr. Speaker, because the single project with which it deals could do more to offset economic disparity in the east than anything else which could be undertaken. There is only one thing which could come near to it, and that is if we were to find oil off the coast of Prince Edward Island—

Mr. Peters: All that would do would be to eliminate the fishing industry.

Mr. Nowlan: I want to read page 14 of this report by the Power Programming Board which says, as far as the need is concerned:

Turning to markets in adjacent areas, to which exports might be made, The Hydro-Quebec load

in 1966 amounted to more than 33,000 million kwh and the peak demand was approximately 6,100 mw. Current forecasts predict that the requirements will increase to 110,000 million kwh and almost 19,000 mw in 1980 and to 231,000 million kwh and 29,000 mw in 1990.

Now, I come to the important part.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Nowlan: Those who say "good" and those who laugh do not understand to what extent we in the east, together with the minister working to remove economic disparity, have set our hopes on this report which is before us today. It is not a laughing matter. I do not care what government is in power, either in Nova Scotia or in Ottawa; they will be working against economic reality in attempting to reduce this disparity of opportunities and living standards if they try to slough off a project which could do so much in a positive way to end the difficulties which the region is encountering.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Greene) is involved in negotiations concerning the continental energy package. He said something about importing cheap oil. Perhaps there will be further questions about importing cheap oil for use in a thermal plant which will further pollute our air. Many questions were asked recently about the voyage of the *Manhattan*. The *Manhattan* and vessels like her, will not only pollute the Arctic but will bring back more oil to be made into gas with which automobiles will in turn pollute the cities. Yet here we have Atlantic tidal power which does not pollute the atmosphere, which is a constantly renewed resource, and which we now intend to neglect after 2½ years of study. In actual fact, interest in this project started before 1920. The president of the university in the town I reside in was, I think, the first I know of to take an interest in this, and he formed a company to do it.

• (2:20 p.m.)

But it is the negative element of the whole report which concerns me. I have not finished reading about the potential demand for energy. He said:

In the United States the total requirements of the six New England States in 1965 were 41,782 million kwh of energy with a peak demand of 8,586 mw. The requirements are forecast to increase to 111,000 kwh and 41,000 mw in 1990.

There are billions of kilowatt hours of energy which are really just going to waste with the changes in the tides. Do you know