

*Atlantic Provinces Power Development*

**An hon. Member:** You know what a red rag does.

**Mr. Lesage:** Yes, but I did not want to say that. The thing is clear, as I said. The principle of the legislation which is before us was outlined in the House of Commons on March 14 and on April 9 last by two members of the previous administration. The provisions of this program were such, I repeat, that they could be implemented without any special legislation because of the terms of the Northern Canada Power Commission Act. Now this government thinks it needs new legislation in order to apply a similar program. I understand that at least as far as the subventions for coal are concerned this new legislation is necessary. I realize that.

After we had outlined that program in the House of Commons and communicated with the premiers of the maritimes provinces, the premiers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick entered into communication with us and we had discussions which continued until what might be called the great shakedown of June 10. During that period from March and April till June these discussions to try to reach agreement with the provinces were going on, because we have always given a good example to the present government in our relations with the provinces; and we were ready to satisfy their desires.

As I say, we worked to that end until June. After June, of course, the new administration took over, but it has taken a long time for the new government to reach agreement with two Tory premiers. I should really have thought that this question would have been settled in two or three weeks after the receipt of the report of the Montreal Engineering Company on August 1, under the blue sky of the Tory heaven which we presently enjoy in Canada. But important parts of the agreement have yet to be settled, according to what the minister of northern affairs has said. He has even repeated this afternoon what he said the other day, namely that no final agreement has been reached or signed with either Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, and I will ask him very respectfully—I am sorry that I have to bother him—if when he closes the debate he will outline to the house with which one of the provinces of New Brunswick or Nova Scotia he has not yet reached agreement; or is it with both? The house would certainly be interested to know, also, what are the points of difference which still have to be settled.

I intend, of course, to vote for this measure because it is Liberal policy implemented by Tories.

**Mr. Harkness:** What?

**Mr. Lesage:** This is the policy outlined by myself on April 9 last.

**Mr. Harkness:** This is so different that there is very little resemblance.

**Mr. Lesage:** There is much less difference between the policy of the Liberals and the one which is represented in this bill than there is between the original bill introduced by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Harkness) and the one he finally presented on farm prices legislation.

**Mr. Harkness:** You are demonstrating that you do not understand either bill.

**Mr. Lesage:** I believe I have no lesson to receive from the Minister of Agriculture as to understanding any bill or any proposal of his if it is not muddled up by his explanations.

**Mr. Harkness:** You lack understanding, I hear.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Eighty-per cent Harkness.

**Mr. Lesage:** I believe that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Harkness) and I understand each other much better when we send nice notes to each other across the floor.

I want to be corrected if I am wrong but it seems to me that there is a new principle involved in the bill. Again, I do not want to refer to any given clause but according to this bill, as I understand it, the government is asking for power to make advances in the form of money to the provinces for the building of what are defined in the bill as power projects which includes thermal plants, transmission lines and other projects defined in the bill. I would like the minister to define in exact terms this new principle which I find in the bill and which, although I stand to be corrected, I do not believe he has mentioned at any time in his explanations either at the resolution stage or on second reading of the bill.

I repeat that I will vote for the principle of the bill which I favour. I hope it will accomplish the objective that we have always expected the implementation of this policy would accomplish, that of assistance to the maritimes and even the Atlantic provinces.

**Mr. Harkness:** You certainly tried hard to get on the band wagon.

**Mr. Lesage:** You are getting on my band wagon with this; you know that.

**Mr. H. Russell MacEwan (Pictou):** Mr. Speaker, before the debate concludes I would like to say a few words regarding this bill. I listened with interest to the speech made