

Atlantic Provinces Power Development

As far as the Avalon peninsula is concerned I could quite agree with the hon. member for St. John's West. It is very probable that on the Avalon peninsula we have fairly well reached the peak of electric development by the use of hydro plants. In St. John's a steam plant has been developed, and I think the fact that this steam plant has been developed is sufficient proof that hydro is not available in quantities large enough to provide the electric power required. But that is not the situation in Newfoundland outside of the Avalon peninsula. As reported at page 3261 of *Hansard* of yesterday my hon. friend, in referring to the Newfoundland members on this side of the house, said:

—I feel they did not thoroughly appreciate the advantages that Newfoundland will gain by this measure and did not sufficiently appreciate conditions as they exist at the present time.

I would assure my friend the hon. member for St. John's West that I am quite conversant with the conditions as they exist on the west coast of Newfoundland. I am sure the people who live from the town of St. George's west to cape Ray will not appreciate the fact that under this bill they are being denied the benefits which might accrue to them by the development of further electric power.

The same might be said for the Port au Port peninsula, although some effort is now being made there by the provincial government. I might go on and say the same thing for both sides of bay of Islands, where an area on the north side is being partially serviced at the moment. I could go on and say the same thing about the Bonne bay area and further down the St. Barbe peninsula, where there is no electrical service at all. If these areas are going to be provided with electric power it is my belief that they will have to be or ought to be provided with it by the building of hydro-electric plants, and that the necessary transmission lines will have to be built to transmit that electricity from its source to the consumers.

Here again I think the hon. member for St. John's West was rather confused in his understanding of what this bill would consider to be a transmission line and what otherwise would be considered to be a distribution line. At a later stage of this bill maybe we shall be able to get this matter clarified, but it appears to me that when the hon. member for St. John's West refers to the areas to which he is referring here, as reported in the second column on page 3262 of *Hansard*, he is referring to distribution lines and not necessarily to transmission lines. It appears to me that under this bill the only thing Newfoundland could expect to get

[Mr. Batten.]

would be assistance in the building of transmission lines. What we need is the development of water power plants and the building of transmission lines to take the electric current from the point at which it is developed to the different points where it could be distributed to the consumers.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, my final suggestion in this matter is that I believe this bill ought to be rewritten and that either the word "thermal" should be deleted or the words "and hydro" should be added. I also believe that, if this is a program of national development by the government, instead of referring only to the Atlantic provinces these benefits should apply to all ten provinces of Canada.

Mr. E. G. McCullough (Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I am sure this bill in general principle will receive support from all corners of the house. However, I feel that I must rise and take some exception to the very restricted nature of the bill. The hon. member who has just taken his seat has made some very useful observations in connection with the fact that the bill is not inclusive enough, that it relates only to dominion assistance in the building of thermal power units and transmission lines, in the Atlantic provinces and that in the case of Newfoundland they probably more properly could use assistance in the developing of hydro power.

It amazes me, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources probably played a large part in the drafting of this legislation. I just wonder when the time is going to come when we are going to develop the resources of this dominion with some eye to unity rather than the kind of bill we have before us this afternoon. I can only say that in the past I have sat in this chamber under former Liberal governments when we have had discriminatory legislation. I can recall in 1955, for example, when I and other members coming from the province of Saskatchewan took a great deal of exception to the fact that when we had flood damage amounting to some \$70 million, we received assistance to the extent of only some \$50,000.

We now have a new government, but it seems we are having the same tune played to us; in other words we still have discrimination. I think the minister will understand me when I say I really cannot understand that he should have had what I believe to be a large part in drafting this legislation, because he knows and I know that he sat in the Saskatchewan legislature as an observer for many years, and he is aware of the peculiar kind of economy in that province. His constituency