

The Address—Mr. D. MacInnis

you." As a result, as members of previous parliaments have seen, cheques for one cent were paid out twice a month by the Cape Breton Development Corporation.

Is this what the government intended? I am not asking that merely as a rhetorical question. Do not the members on the government side of the House feel that Devco was doing the wrong thing, especially as there was a unanimous report from the justice and legal affairs committee on the subject? Devco ignored the report.

Now the situation in Cape Breton is this: in addition to violating the Unemployment Insurance Act, the corporation has said that the pre-retirement leave moneys, so far as it is concerned, are not earnings which come under the unemployment insurance fund but are earnings so far as the Canada Pension Plan are concerned. As a result, those who have been forced to take pre-retirement have continued to make contributions until they have reached the age of 65. Devco has been using the 1923 standard of \$75 pensions. Some men have worked in the collieries for 50 years. They will be paid \$50 from the Canada Pension Plan and will obtain \$25 from the corporation.

Is this what the government intended when it passed section 18 (a)(i) of the act? That section requires Devco to set up a pension plan for its employees. Section 18 (a)(ii) requires the setting up of pension arrangements for former employees and their dependants. In addition to the documentation which I can make available to hon. members, they can peruse that section of the legislation.

One will also find, on reading section 28 (e) of the legislation, how generous are the provisions respecting pensions for the officers of Devco. The criminal aspect of this is that the Devco officers have been brought under the civil service superannuation plan, yet nothing has been done for former employees who come under sections 18 (a)(i) and (ii).

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): What makes this even more hard to take is that in the five-year period some officials of Devco will contribute more than miners contribute in 45 years. In other words, it would take miners 45 years to catch up with the contribution the officers make in five years.

Although nothing has been done with respect to sections 18 (a)(i) and (ii) of the act, Devco is getting ready to sign a contract with its present employees. The arrangement is for a pension of \$4 per year, as I understand it, up to a maximum of 20 years, making a total pension of \$80, or \$5 in excess of the standard set by the previous company in 1923. Surely that is not what the government intended. Surely that is not what the justice and legal affairs committee supported. Again I say there were 12 Liberal members on that committee. This is not what we were led to expect from the legislation passed in this House in 1967. What I say, I say without fear of contradiction. The documentary evidence is there for anybody to examine.

Having established the Cape Breton Development Corporation, the authorities then brought a man over from England, or from the U.K., I ought to say. When he came, he brought many of his buddies with him and then disregarded the wishes of the people of Cape Breton. His

[Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond).]

actions affected the livelihood of the entire Cape Breton area. He imposed on the people, and I have documentation to prove it.

What did he do after imposing on them? In his representations to the minister, he lied; and I say that advisedly. He lied to the minister on a number of occasions and that fact can be documented inasmuch as he appeared before a committee of this House. There he contradicted himself, and Devco officials appearing before the justice and legal affairs committee also contradicted him. In addition, you will find a note from the former minister, the meaning of which is plain. There is a letter verifying the fact that Blackmore lied to the minister on more than one occasion. This can be further verified by a perusal of the evidence placed before the justice and legal affairs committee. It can be shown that it happened on at least three different occasions.

The legislation required Devco to consult with all unions certified under the Nova Scotia labour act. Devco and Blackmore failed to do that. They imposed on the union, they imposed pretty well on everybody, and they made threats. They impose their will on everybody. They say the pre-retirement benefit must be taken this year and that it may not be available next year. They also tell the men their jobs may be gone. They used coercion, lies and threats. This matter has gone to court. The court did not do justice to the situation. This is fully documented for the benefit of everyone. In one instance the court said:

Pension benefits will not be paid to the widows or other dependants following the death of an employee or retired employee, including the plaintiff.

• (2110)

It goes on to say that the plaintiffs would not be called. That is not in accordance with the facts, because some of the plaintiffs were called back. The matter went to the court and the court did nothing. I appeal to every member of this House, this House which is often referred to as the highest court in the land, for justice for the Cape Breton miners and their families, as well as the other people involved.

If we reflect on this situation at the time it began, we will recall that I have been raising the subject since 1967, as well as during the last parliament, in respect of what Mr. Blackmore, the import from the United Kingdom, has done in Cape Breton. It is interesting to note that he is no longer there. The people of Cape Breton, however, today are paying for the sins of Gerald Blackmore just because the House of Commons does not stand behind the legislation passed in 1967.

I appeal to hon. members, especially the government, to stand behind this legislation. In my petition before the House I did not ask for anything that was not in the legislation. I now ask the government to take a good, hard look at what has gone on and to see that what the legislation intended in the first instance is carried out.

I have a document here in respect of what Mr. Blackmore stated. I have a letter signed by the original president, along with the president of the former company. This, however, was dishonoured before the ink was dry. I will make this document available so that all members can check it with the preamble to the legislation, and also