

Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys

certain promises to get ourselves elected. I defy him or any other hon. member of this committee to pick out any such promises that I made. I made no election promises on coal or anything else.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is not a point of order.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): Order.

Mr. Pickersgill: Apparently the hon. member, who was at Moncton at that meeting—at least, his picture was there—did not read the resolutions that he—

Mr. Woolliams: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): Order. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. Woolliams: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I thought this evening we were going to listen to something about coal, and all we have had is a lot of fishy information. I wonder whether we could get back to the subject matter.

An hon. Member: That is no point of order.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, this is a new form of closure. We first have the mines closed and then, when a member gets up to speak about the closing of the mines, supporters of the government try to shut his mouth. That is the way the Tory party respects the rights of parliament.

Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson): The hon. member talks about the closing of mines. I want to ask him—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): Would the hon. member take his seat, please?

An hon. Member: Name him. Throw him out.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): I shall have to ask hon. members to refrain from rising on excuses, fictitious or otherwise, to interrupt the hon. member who has the floor. I do not feel he has received a fair hearing and I would ask hon. members to refrain from rising on anything other than genuine points of order and also to refrain from making continuous interruptions which make it impossible for even the Chair to hear what the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate has to say.

Mr. Pickersgill: As I was saying—

Mr. Pallett: Would the hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. Pickersgill: No. As I was saying, it has been known by the present government since 1958 that there was not available through any of the ordinary existing commercial channels a market for even the amount of coal which was then being produced. The government

[Mr. MacInnis.]

agreed, therefore, to a holiday in 1958 and production in one way or another has been decreasing ever since. It is true that some expedients have been used and the government has always had our support in these expedients, to lengthen the time of the operation and to lengthen the period during which this matter could be considered. Because the government asked for time, first by appointing a royal commission and then because certain other measures were being pursued, in order to find a solution to this problem, the opposition, I think, showed a great deal of patience. The government have known for 15 months that they were faced with the closing of two or three mines this spring. They have allowed one of them to close and they intend to allow another to close without having taken a single step to provide alternative employment of any kind for the men who are being displaced.

Mr. Sevigny: What do you suggest?

Mr. Pickersgill: I suggest that the people elected to govern this country should govern it instead of asking the Liberals to do so. I suggest it was their duty many months ago to provide alternative employment and not to come here the day before the first mine is closed and say "Here is \$1,500,000 to help these people but we do not know how to spend it; we invite suggestions."

Mr. Woolliams: Is this on coal?

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, it was in the minister's statement on coal but no doubt the hon. member was not here, or if he was here he was not listening. It is set out at page 5567 of *Hansard*.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): You were not here.

Mr. Pickersgill: True, I was not here. I was down at the coal mines.

Mr. Pallett: Is the hon. member objecting to that expenditure?

Mr. Pickersgill: No. I would just like to know exactly what the money is going to be spent on.

These are the minister's words as reported on page 5567:

Parliament will therefore be asked to provide an amount of \$1.5 million which will be set aside for approved projects to provide alternative employment this year in the Cape Breton area. Such projects will be considered on their individual merits taking into account the degree of participation by the province in each case.

Good Lord. They let the mine close, and the day before, they say, "We shall ask parliament to appropriate \$1.5 million but we have not the faintest idea what will be done with it; we hope someone will come along with a few suggestions." That is the policy of this government. That is what they