

Atlantic Development Board Act

think is evidence that we should get on with developing these huge power resources both in Labrador and in the rest of the Atlantic provinces.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam was, I am sure, speaking from an academic and theoretical, or perhaps I should say from an uninformed, viewpoint when he said that there ought to be more co-ordination between the Atlantic Development Board and the Department of Industry. I cannot think of any department with which there has been closer co-ordination from the day the Department of Industry was established.

I would remind hon. members that these two agencies have entirely different, though in some respects closely related, functions. The purpose of the Department of Industry is to stimulate industrial development from one end of Canada to the other. This includes Toronto, if it still needs stimulation, as well as anywhere else. On the other hand, the purpose of the Atlantic Development Board, as I said when I introduced the amendments in 1963, is primarily to act as a steady pressure group on every department of the federal government and on all other agencies so as to get things done for the Atlantic provinces.

I do not think it would be appropriate for me to go into the question raised both by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) and by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam as to the reasons that Halifax, Saint John, Fredericton and Dartmouth are not designated areas. However, I think I should remind all hon. members that the criterion for a designated area is the amount of unemployment existing in that area. It does not matter where in Canada any particular area is. What is the criterion is the quantity of unemployment existing in the area.

It just so happens that the employment situation in Halifax, Dartmouth, Saint John and Fredericton is happily good enough that these areas do not qualify as designated areas, and this is a fact for which I think we should be grateful. If we are to have in all parts of Canada designated areas which do qualify under the criteria, then the same criteria obviously have to apply in the Atlantic provinces as apply elsewhere.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

Mr. Diefenbaker: Could I ask the minister a question? Does he not think that the representations of those connected with APEC, with full knowledge of the needs of the Atlantic provinces and having recommended that the Atlantic provinces be so designated, deserve serious attention by the government?

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, Mr. Speaker, of course. I am sure that the right hon. gentleman, who had the responsibility of being prime minister of Canada, never allowed any regional consideration, no matter how strongly put forward, to make him deviate from taking a national point of view. That was his responsibility, as it is the responsibility of every prime minister and of every government.

However strong may be the representations made by APEC and however desirable their recommendations may be in given circumstances—this is a debatable question which I do not propose to discuss on this particular occasion—their representations are naturally made from a regional standpoint. If we are to have a designated area policy such as that we now have applied to the whole of Canada, I think the criteria must be the same for all parts of Canada. That is part of the reason why it is very undesirable to have the Atlantic Development Board and the Department of Industry under the same minister, because they are working to achieve different aims.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Would the minister permit a question?

Mr. Pickersgill: I would prefer to deal with this point first.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): My question is exactly on this point. The minister will have the opportunity to clarify it.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member may put his question when I have concluded what I have to say on the point.

The Department of Industry is working to stimulate industry throughout Canada and to try to even out the unevenness between regions which are designated and regions which are not designated because their unemployment situation is not so difficult. The Atlantic Development Board is devoted primarily to the promotion of industrial and economic development in the whole of the Atlantic region.

• (4:40 p.m.)

Under the designated areas policy direct aid is given to businesses themselves. Direct