

Beechwood Power Project Loan

(Mr. Argue) would find it much easier to support this legislation, which I am sure he is going to support anyway, if he had been given the assurance by the Minister of Finance that if the government of Saskatchewan had asked for a loan to develop a thermal plant that was a sound proposition in itself, as I think the government demonstrated Beechwood was a sound proposition, they would also get a loan.

I feel that hon. members from the other two provinces of Alberta and British Columbia would also find it much easier to give their enthusiastic support to this legislation if they could know that there was the same policy for every part of the country; if they could be assured that this was not just an attempt by the government and by the Prime Minister to look after the difficulties of a friendly provincial government; and they are difficulties, we all admit that.

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): May I ask the hon. member a question? Since he has referred to my province, I am interested in the point he is making. Is the hon. member aware that in today's *Halifax Chronicle Herald* Premier Matheson of Prince Edward Island is quoted as saying on his arrival in Ottawa that his group will seek a better deal for the maritimes from the federal Liberal party? I find this in quotation marks:

Prime Minister Diefenbaker is giving it to us, so why can't the Liberals?

That's why the Liberals were defeated last June. They didn't give the maritimes half a deal.

Mr. Fleming: Words of truth and wisdom.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, if I have your permission to break the rules, as the hon. member for Saint John-Albert has done by introducing a matter that is unrelated—

Mr. Broome: You have broken enough rules to last for the rest of your life.

Mr. Pickersgill: —to the subject before the house, I should be delighted to reply and say very simply that not only do I think but I know that Mr. Matheson will be successful in his quest and that the Liberal program will far outshine this shabby performance that the present government is attempting to put across as a national development policy.

Since the hon. gentleman has interjected this note, what is this national development policy? It is Beechwood which is completed; it is those projects in the other bill which were initiated by the Liberal government; it is the South Saskatchewan dam and surely the Tories are not going to say that they originated the idea of the South Saskatchewan; and it is the Columbia project.

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Are we discussing the South Saskatchewan irrigation dam; are we discussing the Columbia river project, or are we discussing Beechwood? I thought this bill was confined to Beechwood. I would ask that the debate be confined properly to the bill before us.

Mr. Speaker: I think perhaps we all agree that the subject under discussion is the Beechwood project; but where there were references in general terms to broader policy I have given the hon. member a little latitude by reason of the extent of the question which was put to him under the guise of being a question relating to this bill.

Mr. Pickersgill: I thank you, sir.

Mr. Speaker: I think I have given the hon. member his latitude and I would ask him to come back to the bill.

Mr. Pickersgill: I recognize your courtesy and your latitude, for which I am grateful, and I do not intend to abuse either.

Mr. Fleming: You have though.

Mr. Pickersgill: It seems to me there is another point which does deserve some consideration before we complete consideration of this measure. It does seem to me that the government should, before they ask us to vote on the bill, give us a clear, definite, precise statement of how similar loans may be applied for either in New Brunswick or elsewhere for similar projects, and I appeal to the government to do that. It does seem to me that if that could be done this whole matter could be disposed of much more rapidly. I hope that when the government does that, that policy will be sufficiently comprehensive to be fair to all the provinces and that it will also be sufficiently comprehensive to make it possible in the province of Newfoundland to get on with hydro developments there that could not be covered by the other measure which is to be proposed by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources and which are at least as badly needed in that province as Beechwood was in the province of New Brunswick. That, sir, concludes what I have to say on second reading.

Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, we in this group support the measure now before the house because we feel the province of New Brunswick deserves this type of assistance from the federal government. The reasons why New Brunswick has an excellent case have been presented on previous occasions. These special reasons are that the maritimes, including the province of New Brunswick, are a deficit area, that they have