

Government Orders

for eight years and thereafter supported by Senator John Buchanan.

But this premier has not shown the same compassion, the understanding or the willingness to support the Cape Breton Development Corporation in its operations. In point of fact he has done everything to discredit that Crown corporation and thereby discredit the minister who is opposite today. It is a shameful display by a first minister of a province to cut adrift an entire island of people who number about 170,000, as my colleague from Cape Breton Highlands—Canso will later bring to the attention of this House.

The Government of Canada needs the support of the Government of Nova Scotia to get the Donkin mine up and running. It needs the support of the Government of Nova Scotia with regard to coal contracts from the Nova Scotia Power Corporation. Yes, Devco sells coal, as the minister will attest. It sells coal to the Nova Scotia Power Corporation. However, it has been the miner who has been sacrificing his life, his family's life, in order to maintain power costs in the province of Nova Scotia. It is not Donald Cameron and those clowns in Halifax. It is high time the Government of Canada takes the gloves off and stops allowing this provincial premier to get away with wanton disregard and disrespect for a people who happen to reside on a disadvantaged island.

If I were the minister responsible I know what I would do. I would disclose the kinds of shenanigans, the way in which that premier has treated the Cape Breton Development Corporation. This premier has not only attacked the people of Cape Breton Island, the miners of Cape Breton Island, but he has also attacked the management.

Maybe there is ample room there for that, but to do so in the way he has done is something we shall never forget. I urge the minister responsible for the Cape Breton Development Corporation to continue to work to do the best he possibly can, show leadership and disclose what these clowns are all about in Halifax. The minister cannot say these things, but I can say them because I know the difficulties the minister is confronted with when trying to deal with that crowd in Halifax.

I urge him to get on with the Donkin mine. It makes sense. It will create jobs. It will put miners and their families in a much better framework. Where better is it needed than on the island of Cape Breton?

In the two minutes I have remaining, let me say this about Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation. With all the economic carnage on the island, how in the name of God could a federal government today, at 20.9 per cent UIC, terminate a flagship for economic development? I will tell the House how: It is done by the Government of Canada at the support and behest of the provincial government of one Donald Cameron, the good friend of the right hon. prime minister.

• (1300)

I would hope that members in this Chamber would understand exactly what is taking place. It is that those of us who come from small disadvantaged regions of the country are suffering greatly. We seek hope, economic justice and fairness. We do not want any special deals, but we want to have our special relationship that we have always enjoyed with the Government of Canada renewed and invigorated in order to provide hope to those individuals who reside on that island.

The conduct of this government by introducing such dastardly legislation will affect greatly, not only today but for years and years and years ahead, the economy of Cape Breton.

I say to all that I will continue to fight. I will take my place in this Chamber and, no matter how unpopular it may be in some circles, I will stand with the miner, I will stand with the fisherman, the persons who work in our forests, the people who work in our small businesses, the young people and the women, our aboriginals, all of those individuals in Cape Breton. I will stand with them and for them to bring economic justice and fairness to the people of Cape Breton.

I urge all members, regardless of political faith, to support the Official Opposition in condemning the provisions of Bill C-93 and in particular the amendments to gut Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation.

Mr. Raymond Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Madam Speaker, today I would like to deal with one aspect of this legislation before the House and first of all indicate how opposed our party is to the legislation.