

*Atlantic Provinces Power Development*

connection with northern development. However, it did serve as a handy vehicle by which we could operate in these particular deals with these four provinces.

The point I wanted to make is that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre held out this act as one which would cover a vast dominion-wide centralized system of power grids and developments across this country. Then he spoofed the statement made by the Prime Minister in which he pledged that in these matters there would be "co-operation ever and domination never." I believe the house, and the whole of this country, will understand that we have demonstrated a point of view which I think has been clearly made before but now has been crystallized in a better way than could be done by any other person at any time. Here we have the hon. member for Inverness-Richmond (Mr. MacEachen) suggesting that I, as a responsible minister of the crown of Canada, go into his area and help provide local power plants, thus taking over the function of the provincial government.

Then we have the type of operation as laid down in the previous government's approach to this problem of Atlantic power. The previous government was going to build and operate, in the provinces, these power plants and transmission lines. In one case there was to be a leasing system proposed and there was an option to buy agreement. Here you have the principle of the federal government coming into the provinces and duplicating the services of the provincial power commissions, thus demonstrating once more the essential similarity that has been developing over the years in so far as the two parties on the opposite side of the house are concerned. Both of them are centralizing in tendency and centralizing in action. This confirms the suggestions of many political observers that, in effect, during the last few years in Canada we have had a Liberal-socialist government.

I believe we have our own point of view here. We have a government which has an altogether different approach. We have a policy of co-operation with the provinces. We have pledged over and over again to extend local control to the greatest possible degree, whether it be at the provincial level or any other level. Wherever local people control their own affairs we feel that, in the long run, that control is in better hands. Then there is another principle that has been established, and that is the self-liquidating principle. Under this bill the provinces will pay back every cent we are advancing to them for the plants and transmission lines.

The final point I want to mention is the one made by the Minister of Veterans Affairs. Here was a case of justice to a region, a region which had cried out for justice for 25 or 30 years. The situation in the twenties grew worse in the thirties, developed into a crisis during the last war and has finally been met by a government pledged to give justice to regions and justice to groups. We were called together in what we considered an emergency session to provide justice to these groups and these regions which had fallen behind the ordinary level of prosperity in the last few years.

We do not apologize for the fact that our first thoughts, when we came into this house for this emergency session, were to give justice to our aged and disabled; justice to agriculture and justice to these regions in the Atlantic area and in the prairies, such as Saskatchewan which through no fault of their own have fallen behind the general national level. I believe this bill is a good bill. I feel it is one more step towards what we set out to attain when we asked the people to support us on June 10.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Courtemanche in the chair.

On clause 1—*short title*

**Mr. Lesage:** I have two or three questions I should like to ask the minister at this stage. Would he tell us what he understands by the term "transmission lines"? Does he distinguish between transmission lines and distribution lines? Does he understand by "transmission line" one that goes from the power plant to the distribution stations and substations or between distribution stations and distribution substations but does not include the lines going from those distribution stations or substations to the domestic or industrial users?

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** My understanding of "transmission line" is exactly the same as that of the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet. It goes from one plant to another or from one plant to a substation and so on and does not include distribution lines.

**Mr. Lesage:** My second question is about the plant to be erected at Saint John. Is the material or the unit that had been ordered in Britain, I believe by the hydro electric commission of New Brunswick, the one which will be installed at Saint John East? It was ordered before April 9, the date on which I made a statement in the house.

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):** Yes. The order has gone through. We have honoured the previous arrangement.