

Speech from the Throne

pension that would amount to the "enormous" sum of \$45.34 a month. As a result of the maladministration of Blackmore and Ord, he was compulsorily retired at age 60. Consequently, his contributions toward his retirement were curtailed. So although in January of 1969 he was looking forward to a monthly pension of \$45.34 at age 65, at the end of 1970, his first year of forced retirement, his pension was reduced to \$32.19. In other words, \$13.15 a month has disappeared from this man's pension because he has been forced into retirement. Granted, he was promised protection—and I shall refer to that later. For the next four years this man will receive less as a result of his being forced into retirement by Mr. Blackmore and Mr. Ord—happily no longer with Devco—and the miners of Cape Breton are continuing to pay for their maladministration.

Again I ask hon. members opposite to keep in mind the remarks of the minister that my representations were right and justified. In view of the fact that \$6 million has been given to a United States oil company, I appeal to hon. members to give to the miners that to which they are entitled through legislation and the promises made by the minister when the bill went through the House.

If I have not put sufficient appeal into that argument, let me remind hon. members of some of the statements made before the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs by Devco officials. When they appeared before committee in 1969 they claimed that this position had been accepted by the Cape Breton miners. Let me assure hon. members that that is not so. That is another of the blatant lies told by Mr. Blackmore, the responsible official in the coal division at that time. I say that that is a blatant lie, and I will repeat that statement outside the House of Commons on any platform in Canada, even in Alberta where they will have to suffer him now. I will support that statement with that of no less a person than the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion who has given it to me in writing. The Cape Breton miners today are living with a lie told by Mr. Blackmore. They are living with the maladministration of Mr. Blackmore and are paying a very high price for doing so. I ask hon. members to keep this in mind and to ask the government, on behalf of the Cape Breton miners, for a fair deal.

I said that I would refer to certain statements made before the standing committee by Devco officials. Basically, what I am asking hon. members for is to have this government refund to the miners the money taken from them through the subsidization of their own retirement by the UIC fund. In this connection I refer to section 18(1)(b) of the legislation. Section 18(1)(a)(i) and (ii) call upon the government to set up pension arrangements for all present employees and their dependants. Section 18(1)(b) calls upon Devco to set up pension arrangements for former employees and their dependants, and reads as follows:

(1) The corporation shall by by-law provide ... (b) for the contributions thereto to be made by the corporation out of moneys administered by the corporation for the operation of the coal division—

That spells out where the pension money is to come from. But Mr. Blackmore and Mr. Ord decided to use the UIC fund. Although I do not have a great listening audience, this is recommended reading and I would ask each

[Mr. MacInnis.]

and every member of the House to check the accuracy of what I say. Let me repeat that I am going to say nothing that I cannot back up by documented evidence. Page 29 of the sixth report makes it quite clear that Devco admitted the use of coercion to subsidize the miners through the UIC fund. In face of that admission by Devco, and in view of the \$6 million remission, how can we deny the Cape Breton miners their rightful benefits under UIC?

• (1720)

At page 29 of the sixth report it is said that they used coercion to get the men to collect UIC in order to subsidize their own retirement. They said that in 1968-69 this plan had been well explained to everybody involved. Why, then, did they say again before the committee, as appears in the sixth report, that they had to take certain questions back to Sydney in order to analyse their position, and they admitted they could not fully explain it in 1971? Again, that evidence is contained in the committee's report.

Why did they say to me on this occasion that I was asking questions on which they had not done enough homework? They were the high-priced help and the administrators of this plan, and they told me that I was asking questions on which they had not done enough homework. I always said that if Mr. Blackmore had hung around long enough I would have had him up on a charge of contempt of Parliament because he told the parliamentary committee that all the unions had been advised on this matter.

I would ask hon. members to read the committee proceedings at page 19. This is the evidence put before the committee by the then chairman of Devco, who said:

There is no question about that so we will say that if a thing is a *fait accompli*, it is not so much that it is consulting, it is probably telling. That is the whole root of the matter.

The subject matter of that discussion was whether or not the unions involved in this pre-retirement plan had been consulted on the matter. The then chairman of Devco used the expression *fait accompli*. The unions were told of the arrangement after it was agreed to. It was not a matter of negotiation. Yet we have Devco submitting to the committee what they refer to as a pension plan which was available to miners in Cape Breton. They call it the 23 plan. This was never a pension. The miners have never contributed to it, and it was something which the company could have cut off at any time. In fact, the record will show that at the time of the closure of the former Dosco mine, Dosco did cut this off. It was never a pension.

Yet now, when Devco produced their evidence before the committee, they referred to this 23 plan as a pension plan. That is very strange, because on June 20, 1967, the minister responsible for piloting the bill on Devco through the House, Bill C-135, an act to set up the Cape Breton Development Corporation, as recorded on page 1756, referred to this as a gratuity. Those are the words of the minister responsible at the time the legislation went through the House. So how can Devco call it a pension?

I would further substantiate my claim that the legislation under section 18 (1) (a) and (b) has not been conforming with and that the Cape Breton Development Corporation is supposed to conform with that legislation. This is a matter that can be checked out. You can ask Mr. Kent, the president of Devco, what the situation is with respect