

Adjournment Debate

educational rights. Just like him, I was rather disappointed by the statements made by the premiers last week, because, Mr. Speaker, as he himself indicated, the premiers declaration can be interpreted as an acceptance of the principle of education in the two official languages without any commitment to its implementation. This second principle can be interpreted—and I believe that is the Quebec premier's interpretation—as a supporting bill 101 in the province of Quebec, which, I am sure, is not all in keeping with the views of the premiers of the other provinces.

So just like the hon. member, I am somewhat puzzled by the interpretation which should be given to that statement, and I think like him, that it demonstrates the importance of writing the linguistic rights to education in the official languages into the Constitution, which happen to be the aim of this government. Last September, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) raised that issue with the premiers and I myself did likewise last November, in discussions I had with the ministers of education. I again raised it also in connection with the charter of linguistic rights of minorities. Just before Christmas, we stressed the importance given at the federal level to the idea that the provinces will agree to exceptions to these very important rights.

As the hon. member already pointed out, there are federal agreements with the provinces for the financial support of second language education and also, what is very important, the education of the minority groups. Since I became Secretary of State, I have been concerned with the implementation of these agreements, because the objectives as well as the criteria are not clearly specified, which makes for an inadequate assessment and accountability of these programs.

I believe that the hon. member has often emphasized, and other members as well, the importance of earmarking during the negotiations the funds to be transferred to the provinces under a formula designed to meet the objectives established in the programs. That is why in the course of my negotiations with the provinces, I hope that we will succeed in specifying certain points especially with regard to the minority language. The hon. member has described a formula, a program, a means to ensure that the moneys used to attain these objectives will actually be used for that purpose. It is not only a mere transfer in principle, a theory calling for the funds to be used for the implementation of just about any objective. The fundamental objectives of these programs means that some kind of support of the minority language education must really be achieved.

These are the negotiations under way. I hope to meet again with the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada in the near future. We will have to negotiate in the hope of reaching before March 1979 a new agreement to last for a period of five years.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I regret to inform the hon. minister that his allotted time has expired.

[Mr. Roberts.]

● (2212)

POWER—NEWFOUNDLAND—FEDERAL ASSISTANCE IN POWER PROJECTS

Mr. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, on February 21 I asked the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) a question about the Gull Island project. On February 13 to 15 the first ministers of Canada had their great conference. The conference of the "Great Poohbahs" was held in Ottawa. The first ministers' caper was performed before the Canadian public on television. At that conference two specific things in the energy field were promised to the people of Canada. One was that the Gull Island project in Labrador would go ahead; the other was a project in Saskatchewan. The communiqué from the conference was a laugh: it listed another 12 projects that were to be considered for action soon.

That announcement aroused expectations that at last the federal government was moving on a project that had been put before them first in March, 1974. When we got a chance to look at the release issued by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and the premier of Newfoundland, we found that the Gull Island project was not going into full gear immediately but that a corporation was to be set up by the province and the federal government. Further studies were to be done to see whether that or any other project of Labrador, hydro might be economically and technically justifiable.

What nonsense, Mr. Speaker! These studies were done three years ago and the proposal has been before the federal government for two years and five months. The great action to come out of this conference was "further studies". One of the main features of the conference was the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources performing the greatest bubble act since the south sea bubble of the eighteenth century. Rumours swept the country that he was going to create one million jobs in energy projects. He went on television with his list of some 40 projects to create a million jobs which would put the one million unemployed to work immediately.

One of those projects was the Kitimat oil port and pipeline which was kiboshed several days ago. That shows the transparent dishonesty of that exercise. Another was the Gull Island hydro development and transmission line. The gullible are no longer going to gulp Gillespie. They did not believe this, and it was a lucky thing they did not because there was not an ounce of truth in the whole performance. The Gull Island project is not going ahead, nor are the other 40 projects that were listed. Indeed, some were already started. It was a shocking, transparent attempt to convince people that the government were doing something in the areas of employment and energy, when actually they were not.

The Gull Island project was first proposed to the government in March, 1974. It was a \$2.3 billion project to develop 1800 megawatts of hydro power resources on the Lower Churchill River, with a transmission line to the Strait of Belle Isle and a tunnel under the straits to Newfoundland. Newfoundland has no further sources of major hydro power on the