

Dominion-Provincial Relations

One of our biggest problems in the maritimes, particularly in the province of Nova Scotia, has to do with farm or rural credit. Only a few months ago the Hawkins commission in the province of Nova Scotia made very definite recommendations.

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Speaker, I must rise again. My hon. friend is talking about farm credit. He has been talking about coal and subventions. Coal subventions and thermal development are two matters that were discussed in earlier debates. Action was taken on them by the house, and they are concluded. Surely this is far removed from matters germane to the debate on second reading of this particular measure.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rea): I do not want to remind the hon. member again. I said before that he could mention these things but not enter into a debate on them. After all, we are on second reading of the bill and the principle of the bill is supposed to be discussed at this time. I hope the hon. member will not enter into a debate on every subject he brings up.

Mr. Kirk: I thank you again for your ruling, not only for your ruling but the very kind way in which you made it. I only had one other main topic that I wished to mention, but in deference to your ruling I shall, of course, not do so. However, I am wondering whether one of the reasons I may have gone as far afield as I have on second reading is the fact that for the last few weeks I have done quite a bit of reading of speeches made by the Minister of Finance when he sat on this side of the house.

May I close by saying that we in the Atlantic provinces quite frankly appreciate this move and quite frankly say that we think it is a step in the right direction. We think it will be of help. We realize that so far as the \$25 million is concerned, of which \$7½ million will go to my own province of Nova Scotia, it is for a period of four years and therefore is an interim deficiency payment. Nevertheless we believe it is a move in the right direction and will increase the incomes of the governments of each of the four provinces. It will enable them to carry on certain projects which they have started and others which they feel they must start.

Having said that, however, I must say in all fairness that when the announcement was made the premier of my own province, Premier Stanfield, as reported in the press only a day or two ago, said that while this measure would help it was not nearly enough, and would not provide for doing nearly as much as they had hoped would be done for

the benefit of Nova Scotia. Without mentioning again any of the specific items I mentioned earlier I say that much as this will be of help, if the government would take bolder and more imaginative action they would assist not only the Atlantic provinces but all the provinces of Canada. I do not mean by increasing substantially and directly the incomes of the provincial governments, but by taking such action as would increase the per capita income of the individuals in each of the provinces, and thus in turn improving the income not only of the provinces but of the federal government.

Mr. Colin Cameron (Nanaimo): Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to spend too much time on the minister's arithmetic, as other members have done—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): He did not do so either.

Mr. Cameron:—because, to be quite frank, I have a fellow feeling for the minister. I recognize him now as a rival to myself as champion in the field of faulty arithmetic. I always thought I was in a class by myself when it came to the ability to add up columns of figures and get two or three wrong answers. It was an ability I displayed during my school days, and I sometimes wondered if I did not shorten the life of one of my unfortunate teachers when he would be confronted with the wrong answer which I had achieved after several pages of careful but incorrect calculation. But what really sent him around the bend was when I came up with the right answer as the accidental result of a number of mistakes cancelling each other out.

The other day, when I heard the minister modestly taking pride in the fact that in spite of his somewhat unorthodox methods he had arrived at within \$3,000 of the correct answer, I could almost see the ghost of that old teacher quivering with fury over me and muttering, "double distilled essence of stupidity". That is a phrase that has been graven on my heart and has caused me ever since to view my arithmetic with a very dubious eye, and always to check it with someone more competent than myself. This is a course I would commend to the minister.

As a British Columbian, Mr. Speaker, I was seriously perturbed when I tried to picture what was going to happen to the unfortunate premier of my province who, we are given to understand, is suffering anyway from a case of natural blind staggers, when he found that Santa Claus was holding before him a \$5.5 million gift and then thrusting it back in the bag and producing one at half the price. He must almost have had a heart attack over that change in the minister's attitude. I am