

Cape Breton Development Corporation Act and not part of it. Certainly the unemployment insurance fund is not the type of fund that can be used to get over difficulties in which the government finds itself. It is still an insurance plan under, presumably, an impartial commission which operates in accordance with regulations it has established. Obviously, in this case it did not establish a regulation. The regulation established by the government and operated by Devco allowed them to integrate the amount that would be paid from the unemployment insurance fund to the workers as part of the \$3,000 settlement that the miners were to receive. Three thousand dollars is not a very large sum for the pension plan of an industry in which many miners have spent 20 or 30 years.

I think the amount they normally would have received from the unemployment insurance fund should have taken into consideration the fact that the men were available for work and then, as in other parts of Canada, at the end of a certain period other parts of the Unemployment Insurance Act would come into effect. This would mean transferring the workers to areas of high employment. This obviously was not done. There must have been some very dishonest people working in the unemployment insurance office, because these people were not available for work in the true sense of the word. This must have been known to the Unemployment Insurance Commission. There was obviously collusion between these two groups.

When speaking in a debate involving another bill for which the Minister of Regional Economic Development (Mr. Marchand) was responsible, I mentioned that a number of schemes have been operated in the Maritimes. One of them involved a heavy water plant in the same general area as Devco. I suggested at that time there should be legislation which would pick up the tab for whatever must be done to either establish or dispose of the liability for the heavy water plant in Cape Breton. If the government intends to get into this project, I believe it should do so by the front door, not by the back door.

• (8:10 p.m.)

I am sure most hon. members would support the government in any decision to put some money into the heavy water plant, though I believe we would all demand a much greater degree of control over the operation of that plant. We would probably demand that the Atomic Energy Commission give serious consideration to whether it was right in

[Mr. Peters.]

the advice it gave about the best way of producing atomic power. The question as to whether heavy water or enriched uranium is the better material in these circumstances should be decided before Canada is called upon to spend any more money in this direction. We should be making a decision on this question.

The bill, in part, would allow the government, through Devco, to do something about this situation, because it would permit large sums of money to be borrowed. If the operation is not satisfactory, we shall have to pick up the tab anyway, in the event of bankruptcy, and I would prefer assistance to be provided openly rather than through the back door.

Some charges have been made with regard to management. These charges are serious and should be investigated. If staff are being brought from England, and in particular from the National Coal Board whose history is not without calamities, and the appointments include people who cannot operate well in a Canadian context, we should be doing something about the situation.

To judge from the speeches made so far, there is general acceptance of Mr. Campbell; most hon. members have paid tribute to his accomplishments. He is a tough customer, I understand, and he will probably be approaching the government shortly with demands for a clean-up as an alternative to his ceasing to be chairman of the operation.

What we are being asked, in effect, is to confer important new borrowing capacity upon a corporation which, apparently, has not succeeded in doing the job for which it was established. In his outline of the legislation the minister told us that the bill sought to add only two relatively minor amendments to the act which is now in operation. I do not think this approach was entirely fair. If the present legislation is not working as anticipated, when the minister appears before the committee he will be obliged to provide answers to some of the important questions which have been raised. If not, we will have a new minister.

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Yourself?

Mr. Peters: There is no need for hon. members to travel personally to the Maritimes to find out whether these projects are working effectively. When the representatives from the Maritimes express their views in this House as strongly as they did today, I for one