

Grants to Newfoundland

The hon. gentleman said he did not say that, however, and it is accepted.

Mr. Pearson: The Prime Minister knows he did not.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege, and it is a rather serious matter, I think. I know these are the ways one persuades some audiences, but we are trying to get at the truth here. A tape recording of my speech was made and before I made that correction I took the trouble of having it verified to be sure of precisely what I had said. I then wrote to the only two newspapers in which this erroneous statement occurred and made the correction. I never saw whether the *Telegram* carried it, but the *Ottawa Journal* did, and I am sure, knowing the Prime Minister's clipping service at least as well as he does, that he would have found the clipping there if he had looked for it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I do not know what the complaint is. I accepted the correction because it is obvious the hon. gentleman did not think that.

Mr. Pearson: Then stop repeating untruths.

Mr. Diefenbaker: May I therefore conclude by referring to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and say that we do want to strengthen the bonds between Canada and Newfoundland, as we do with all the provinces of Canada. That has been the reason for the policies adopted by this government which render available several hundred million dollars more to the provinces than was the case under the previous government. So far as the Atlantic provinces are concerned, we saw there the results of 22 years of rule on the part of those hon. gentlemen opposite. We brought into effect grants each year to assist those provinces to make provision economically for their development, and we will follow and continue to follow those policies to the end. There will not be in the years ahead, as we expect, the inequality which existed for so many years between the economic earnings of people in all parts of our country. We also want to see the building of that spirit of Canadianism. In that regard Newfoundland has shown its spirit and its attitude, and it is welcomed.

My hon. friend says that there has been a breach of faith, but I say to him, with all the power at my command, that statement is unwarranted, unfair and unjust. Those things were said, those exaggerated phrases were uttered, in the course of debate; but

as the years go by and the people of Newfoundland see the application of these principles which we have adopted, the criticisms of 1955 made against the former government will evaporate in the light of a progressive policy to ensure that Newfoundland shall attain its proper position along with the other provinces in the confederation.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): As you know, Mr. Speaker, all of us in this house are equal, but some are more equal than others and as I have not got the unlimited time which the Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) has I cannot enter into all the aspects of the 100 per cent diversion from the subject to which the house listened this afternoon. It is very characteristic of the Prime Minister that when there is no answer to an argument he should change the scene, shift the scenery with great skill and produce effects which sometimes take people in until the third or fourth performance. But we in this house are getting well past the third or fourth performance.

I do not intend to pursue some of the things he said about statements made by Mr. Smallwood in 1954 or 1955—statements which perhaps I might not agree with—any more than I could remind the Prime Minister of some of the things said by Mr. Duff Roblin in the past few weeks of which, perhaps, the Prime Minister would not like to be reminded, to say nothing of the statements which have been made by Mr. Frost.

The Prime Minister said something about what had been done by the previous government for the fishery. I should like to tell the Prime Minister what was done by the previous government about the fishery, but I think the best evidence that the people of Newfoundland were satisfied with what was done in at least one constituency was the fact that I did not need to be self appointed in 1958, despite the Prime Minister's best efforts to see that I did not get back to this house; in fact, I was elected in 1958 with a majority considerably larger than in 1957. I say this for one reason only, because this suggestion that in some way or another the people of Newfoundland do not vote for their representatives like other people of Canada is, I think, an unreasonable one.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Who suggested that?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): What is the next diversion?

Mr. Pickersgill: I am merely following the Prime Minister's diversions, and I am not going to follow many of them.

An hon. Member: Would the hon. gentleman permit a question?