

various regions experience. There is ample authority under other statutes to overcome the difficulties which exist in the city of Montreal without having to dilute the one measure on which the Atlantic provinces have placed so much hope.

It is unfortunate that we will leave here tonight, having approved this bill, and still not knowing what will happen in six month's time if the worst of my fears come true. I hope to God they will not, but we still do not know what will happen if we find that no applications are being made to locate in the Atlantic provinces, except from industries that cannot make a go of it in Montreal or industries which do not want to market their product in that area. It may be that we will have applications from service industries which are similar to industries already located in the Atlantic region.

I do not think we have ever suggested that the Atlantic provinces should be turned into an industrialized area. Industrialization is good, but we do not necessarily want that sort of thing. What we do want is a program on which we can place a continuing trust and confidence. We want a program on the basis of which we can plan ahead for the next four or five years. We do not want to wake up one morning and find that something we did yesterday should have been postponed until tomorrow. This is not and never has been good enough. I suggest it will never be good enough.

The political impact of what is happening will not necessarily be felt anywhere in Canada this winter, let alone in Montreal. There is no way that new industry is going to get started between now and next spring. The minister should give some assurance that something will be done in the Atlantic provinces. He has said it only takes two or three weeks to process an application, in rare cases a little bit longer. Since he made that comment, I have received a number of letters and several phone calls. I will forward this correspondence to the minister if he wishes. It relates to specific cases in which it has taken five, six, seven and even eight weeks to process applications. In these cases, at least in the opinion of the applicants, all of the information was supplied in order that the applications could be finalized. Perhaps these people have been misled, but in terms of time the procedure has taken a lot longer than the minister suggested in the committee.

Even after five or six weeks, the implementation of this bill will have very little effect in the city of Montreal. It will have a long term effect on the industrial development of the Atlantic provinces. Within a period of two or three years from the implementation of this measure, I suggest that industry will not choose to locate in the Atlantic area but will opt in favour of the city of Montreal.

I had hoped that the minister would accept our amendment proposed yesterday rather than the token amendment he did accept. It is regrettable that he did not. I hope the minister will find some way of telling the people in the Atlantic provinces, and in other designated areas, just exactly what the government intends to do if this measure fails. This will have a very direct relationship to

Regional Development Incentives Act

the cutback in the number of applications and the growth we can expect.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I get the impression that the attentive capacity of hon. members is lessening. Because of the very late hour, and the fact that some Liberal members want to speak, I will try to be as brief as possible.

• (8:10 p.m.)

I had an opportunity to speak on this bill when it was first introduced last week and when it was in committee. However, I should like to summarize a few of my feelings this evening before the measure passes. First of all, Bill C-205 has now passed the committee stage. When it was before the committee we had an opportunity to hear the minister, his deputy and the witnesses who were called to appear. Then we had an opportunity to study the bill clause by clause and to hear the minister and his deputy again. During the time this bill has been studied I have been bewildered at times because there has seemed to be a lack of enthusiasm for the bill by government members.

An hon. Member: Speak for yourself.

Mr. Nystrom: For example, to my knowledge, the hon. member for Mercier (Mr. Boulanger) did not participate in the debate. The only way he has participated in the debate so far has been to interject from his seat or to speak on a point of order. I find this amazing. I feel sorry for the minister. I know he must be very unhappy about some of his backbenchers. He must feel very sad that they have neither defended his bill nor offered opinions or constructive criticism. I would not wish to be in his position and I am sure most members on this side of the House would not want to be in his position. I assume that some hon. members opposite will offer comments tonight in respect of this bill. I know the hon. member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. McBride) and the deputy whip of that party are very happy. I hope some of these hon. gentlemen will participate in the debate. Where are the government members? Why are they not participating?

I believe we all realize that the problem we are discussing is serious. The purpose of this bill is to designate a few more areas in Canada and to raise the ceiling on loans and fees. I think we all recognize that in Canada the regional problems are very acute. We know the average income in places such as Newfoundland is much lower than it is in Ontario. We know that the increase in the per capita income in Newfoundland did not rise as rapidly as it did in Ontario, despite the fact that we have a regional policy and a department which should be looking after this matter.

We realize there are regional problems all over the world and that Canada's position is not unique. We also understand that one thing that has motivated this bill at this time is the special situation in the province of Quebec. I do not deny there are special problems in the province of Quebec which must be solved if we are to keep our country together and if we want to celebrate