

Adjournment Debate

order to stimulate the recovery of the Quebec economy. That is why I asked the minister how important a meeting of this kind would be. This evening, I want to stress the importance of this matter once again to the parliamentary secretary, and I want to ask the minister to set up a weekly review of all economic files at Regional Economic Expansion or Industry, Trade and Commerce and any related department, to keep our Quebec file from gathering dust on the desks of public servants. I feel that we should all work together and that we need active co-operation to keep those files moving, and that decisions must be made as soon as possible so that we can help industry and small- and medium-sized businesses in Quebec benefit from various federal programs.

Mr. David Berger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that in fact as a result of the hon. member's suggestion and suggestions by a number of our colleagues in the Quebec caucus, a meeting was held in Quebec City on March 1. The meeting involved the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Gray), the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) and the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Lapointe), representing the Government of Canada, and on the other side, Ministers Landry, Parizeau and Biron. On that occasion, a senior officials liaison committee was formed with orders to report in a month's time on ways and means of harmonizing and co-ordinating business assistance programs administered by both governments.

However, I would point out to the hon. member that the federal ministers reminded their provincial counterparts that the Canadian government lends assistance to small and medium-size businesses in Quebec through the following seven instruments:

(1) The Small Businesses Loans Act. More than 5,000 loan guarantees were authorized in Quebec in 1980-81 under this program;

(2) The business expansion program under which 250 grants and 54 loan guarantees were approved in Quebec in 1980-81;

(3) The Federal Business Development Bank authorized more than 1,200 loans in Quebec in 1980-81 and underwrote 13 risk capital ventures;

(4) The program for export market development. No fewer than 477 grants were authorized in Quebec during fiscal year 1980-81;

(5) The Department of Regional Economic Expansion legislation on industrial grants. No fewer than 612 grants were approved in Quebec in 1980-81;

(6) The Export Development Corporation loaned \$608 million to Quebec companies and provided insurance coverage on goods exported from Quebec and valued at \$931 million;

(7) The federal bond program for small and medium-size businesses enabled over 1,318 Quebec businesses to secure loans worth \$186 million during the period from April, 1981, to January, 1982.

In addition to those seven instruments, the Canadian government has established in the past year, as the hon. member knows, a few programs aimed at helping businesses and workers adversely affected by foreign competition, including the industry and labour adjustment program and the Canadian Industrial Renewal Board—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the hon. parliamentary secretary, but his time has expired. The hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay).

• (2205)

[English]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION—REQUEST FOR MEASURES TO ASSIST INDUSTRIES IN NOVA SCOTIA

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, this evening I wish to continue the statements I made on February 25 to the Minister of Industry Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Gray). On that occasion I requested, on an urgent basis, some aid for key Nova Scotia industries, specifically Hawker Siddeley Corporation and Sydney Steel. I was told by the minister who answered my question, the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Lapointe) that I would get a satisfactory response. As yet I have not received one.

It is very tempting to be sarcastic and partisan tonight and point out to the minister that his priorities are wacky, and that so are those of his government in that they expanded greatly the foreign aid of this country to the tune of 20 per cent. Among other things this will build a \$200 million airport in Trinidad and Tobago. It has recently increased the allocation through export development by another \$50 million, so that it can fund to a greater extent that monument to the Algerian revolution. There is still no meaningful response to the real requirement that something be done to save the trained work force and the proven capacity of industry in places like Halifax, Trenton, Sydney and others in the entire Atlantic region.

• (2210)

However, I will resist the temptation to be totally negative tonight, although I must say I think I have provocation because of the complete lack of courtesy shown to me by my colleague in responding on an urgent basis to some of the requests I made. I suggest to him that if it is a question of funds which he requires to provide some much-needed material for the CNR, for Canadian shipyards and, indeed, for SYSCO, I trust I can show him a couple of avenues he might pursue.