

corridor to the government of Canada, the government will certainly give the matter most serious consideration.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION—NOVA SCOTIA—NEW INITIATIVES IN LIGHT OF RESIGNATION OF PROVINCIAL MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, on September 12 I asked the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Jamieson) a question relating to the performance of DREE and possible new initiatives. Before mentioning some possibilities in this regard, let me deal very briefly with some of the policy statements made in the 1973-74 edition of the maritime provinces Chamber of Commerce report which I should like to put on the record. There are two major items which should be considered by this government and by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion.

There are persistent reports that meaningful decentralization of DREE is being impeded by the reluctance of personnel of the department to relocate. I have concluded after some investigation that this is just not so. While at first this may seem reassuring, upon reflection I am not so sure it is. It appears there has been no opportunity for any reluctance on the part of employees of DREE to move, because the department has not even progressed to this stage of proceeding. It appears that no employees have been in fact classified or identified, and perhaps no employees have even been approached with the object of decentralization in mind. If this is so, it is perhaps even more disturbing than any allegation of reluctance because it indicates a lack of real progress.

I do not want to be cynical about decentralization as it is a very worth-while objective. I hope when it does come, the decision-making powers and not just bodies will be decentralized. I hope the minister is paying some heed to the recommendations of the Atlantic Development Council in their annual report for the establishment of a vehicle whereby provincial governments, the region as a group and the federal government can meet to discuss, plan and agree upon the needs of the region and the policies and the programs required to meet them.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the foreign investment review act, Bill C-132, is obviously of great direct concern to DREE and to the slow-growth areas. As I have stated before, the aims and objects of this legislation are certainly in the national interest but the slow-growth areas of this nation may find the effects counterproductive to their own development.

This fear was reflected recently by the delegates to the convention of the Liberal party at the Chateau Laurier. The minister must, and I am confident that he will, take the opportunity to arrange for compensatory measures in order that slow-growth areas do not make more than their fair contribution to the effort to halt foreign domination of our economy. However, the slow-growth areas of this country need certain concessions. They do not need coercion; they need concessions in transport and fiscal policy and perhaps even with regard to tariffs. More than that, they definitely need some alternate source of development capital from some sort of Canadian investment or development corporation. We are looking to the minister of DREE

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to jealously guard and to zealously advance the interests of the slow-growth areas. His responsibilities will permit him to do no less.

● (2210)

I should also like to suggest to the minister that with regard to the Cape Breton Development Corporation he continue his enlightened and considered policies. The next step that perhaps he will consider is to appoint a person of some judicial or quasi-judicial background to continue the initiatives put in motion by himself and the committee on regional development to study and make recommendations on pensions and ancillary matters regarding Devco employees.

I want now, in the brief time left to me, to put on the record some of the recommendations of the maritime provinces Chamber of Commerce. This organization is a voluntary association of progressive business and professional citizens. It is politically non-partisan, is working for good government at all levels and is certainly concerned with the commercial, industrial and civic welfare of the Maritimes. It deserves to have, in my opinion, some real input into DREE policy. As a matter of fact, there are many other like organizations, a few of which are the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Ontario Development Corporation, ADC, and in a real way the Canadian Labour Congress. All of these organizations have a great many sound and good policies that should be considered directly by the minister in his initiatives for DREE.

Many of the recommendations of the maritime provinces Chamber of Commerce are concerned with infrastructure. As the member who preceded me has said, some of the infrastructure concepts are fundamental to the development of the Atlantic region. The development of our marine resources, for example, is mentioned by the Chamber of Commerce. They also deal very directly and in some detail with the possibilities involved in the corridor road to which the hon. member has just referred, and come back again to this overriding concern at the moment regarding Bill C-132 and its possible effects on the region's development.

In closing, I want to quote briefly from the current policy statements of the maritime provinces Chamber of Commerce on this particular topic and to read their recommendation into the record as follows:

That the maritime provinces make every effort to encourage new capital to the area, regardless of its source, and the Government of Canada be discouraged from implementing any national policy of limiting foreign investment in Canada without—

I emphasize the word "without".

—taking into account regional considerations.

I hope the minister will take these representations into account when he is considering some of his options regarding regional development.

Mr. Charles Turner (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the minister, and in the absence of his parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for St. Denis (Mr. Prud'homme), I wish to reply to the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay).

The hon. member is aware from the minister's reply in the question period last Wednesday that he has had dis-