

Government Organization

As far as I am concerned, I am very happy to hear the minister explain to us those projects which are realistic and advantageous for the development of this segment of an industry which, incidentally, interests my constituency. As I have myself been involved for several years in touristic promotion, I would like to suggest to the minister that in his relations with the provinces, particularly with Quebec, he should try to establish a system which would enable regional touristic promotion organizations to increase the number of touristic centres. They exist in many areas, but they have not been developed as they should because municipalities do not have the necessary funds.

The minister will appreciate—because I am sure he has visited the sites—that there are in the area of Trois-Rivières remains of the first ironworks in Canada, the old smithery of St. Maurice, known also as St. Michel des Forges and which is now part of the city of Trois-Rivières.

This is a touristic, archeological and historical treasure which is undeveloped. We have the plans of that old forge, the foundations of which still exist. All sorts of historical objects are found there, but nothing is done about that, Mr. Chairman. I know that the federal government has already done something in that direction. I know also that the national parks branch especially is well-disposed about that, but it would probably need the co-operation of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. It seems that there is a misunderstanding on the constitutional aspects of the problem, because some Quebec ministers argue that the central government should not interfere in such matters.

The situation is disastrous and I am sure that men of goodwill could find a way to revalorize an industry which, after all, is unique and which would be an attraction for the great number of Americans and Europeans who are anxious to visit this reconstruction of the first ironworks in Canada. I am told that the iron-smelting industry of the United States has been approached and would be ready to contribute substantial amounts to the restoration of that old forge of St. Maurice. That did not materialize but I am sure that the minister, with all his lucidity and all his diplomacy, might be successful in convincing the Quebec authorities to co-operate with the federal and municipal governments in order to multiply the touristic centres, which would give to the organizations involved in promoting tourism in their region, the necessary means for efficient and

effective action, so that the money and the work devoted by his department to promote the tourist industry will create a spirit of co-operation at every level of government.

I would like to end my remarks by congratulating the minister on his appointment as head of this important department. I would also like to tell him that we of the province of Quebec in particular, are proud to see him accede to this office and to see that he is doing his job so well. I wish him good luck in his new duties.

• (4:50 p.m.)

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Chairman, I should also like to say a few words on the third part of the bill before us, which deals with industry, which obviously comes under the new department of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

However, before I begin, Mr. Chairman, I should like to draw the attention of the house on a rather unpleasant experience for our party this afternoon. The hon. member for Compton (Mr. Latulippe) was speaking, and when he asked for two extra minutes to conclude his speech, some government members refused. I thought it was ill-mannered of them and was inclined to give them tit for tat, but I controlled myself, and we willingly granted extra time to those who needed a minute or two to conclude their speech. I shall say no more, because I know you could call me to order on that point, and it would not be the first time it was done at the expense of our party, Mr. Chairman.

I want to congratulate the minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin), who will be recognized as the minister responsible for that Department, and I extend to him my best wishes for success at the head of that Department.

We say, that this is a new Department, but we do not have to go back very far to find reservations. In fact, the minister himself said, and I quote:

The amalgamation of the Departments of Trade and Commerce and of Industry plays a very important role in the present reorganization of the federal government, the third since 1963—

I do not consider this department as something new, but rather as a step backward, because there already has been such a department.

I think it was the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson who divided this department, and no doubt it was realized that it was a mistake. I always wondered why this was done. Industry and Commerce are two complementary