

Employment and Immigration

deputy minister. Clause 5 sets out the powers, duties and functions of the minister.

● (1130)

Clause 5(1)(a) establishes the function of developing and utilizing labour market resources in Canada. These are not unusual things. But there is power in the statute to delegate certain of the functions of the minister in order to operate the department, whether that is done here or somewhere else. There is no geographical limitation in the bill. In fact, the indication is that the bill will operate across the country. The thrust of the bill and the government's approach to this matter, after some changes of heart, is that it is conceivable there will be districts established where certain rules will apply, at least for a temporary period, and these rules might be different in district A, for instance, as opposed to district B. The fact that the bill establishes differences based upon areas of the country designated in the method that the minister has indicated, to my mind leaves open, in a procedural sense at least, the implication—and I suggest it is stronger than that—of consultation between the department, other levels of government and other bodies and agencies concerned with employment.

The amendments which have been put down at report stage by the hon. member for Hamilton West deal explicitly with what is already, by the nature and scope of the bill, implicit in the bill. For that reason—and that is the only contribution I have to make, at least on amendment No. 1—I ask, Mr. Speaker, that you look at this from a procedural point of view, and with respect I say that this amendment ought to be found in order. Certainly it is not—and this is beyond the mere procedural point—out of order in terms of the present method and scope of the operations of the department in any event if we are to believe what the department tells us about the way it operates. That merely buttresses the procedural point. We want to express explicitly what is implicit in the bill. That is true of the clauses I have read into the record, and if we go further the same implications apply. On that ground, I submit that the amendment is in order.

Mr. Arnold Malone (Battle River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a few comments on some of the procedural aspects of this amendment. It ought to be very clear that all the amendment of the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) does is enshrine in legislation the intent of the government as it was expressed in the committee. When we consider this matter in the context of federal-provincial relationships, one distinguishing fact is that there are areas of co-operation and areas of separation of power. For example, if this amendment dealt with national defence, external affairs or something relating to CIDA, it might be out of order because those matters are dealt with specifically by the federal government. However, in every province of Canada there are departments of labour or departments dealing with matters related to employment.

Traditionally, there have been interrelationships between federal and provincial governments. While we have had federal departments of manpower and labour, there have also been

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton).]

provincial departments and the level of consultation has not been as satisfactory as we would have liked it to be. Therefore, this amendment is being proposed. I could read into the record letters from various provincial ministers and groups which state that consultation is unsatisfactory at the present time, but I will not take the time to do so.

I just point out that the provinces of Alberta, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan claim that while there may be some attempt at consultation, the fact is that the level of consultation is unsatisfactory and the provinces require more. I have detailed information before me setting this out. We have a situation where both the federal government and the provincial governments are involved in implementing manpower and labour programs and for seeing to the maintenance of those programs. But it is requested that more consultation take place. This amendment simply enshrines in legislation that which the minister says he wants to do and which the department says it is already doing. But the provincial governments say that the level of consultation is not adequate.

Surely, if the minister is going to stand on the kind of verbiage he gave us in committee, he himself should want to support the kind of recommendation that is being put forward by the hon. member for Hamilton West, because the amendment sets forth a position the minister took in committee. If he wants to be consistent, he might as well indicate that, here, in this House. We object to trapdoor legislation which has some 33 amendments. Those amendments were not brought about by full consultation between parliament and the government, and all we are indicating is that if the government cannot consult with parliament, it is certainly not capable of consulting with the provinces.

We hope this amendment goes through. We hope it is found procedurally acceptable so that we can enshrine in legislation something which would be acceptable not only to the federal government of the day but also to all the provinces, because a number of them are on record as saying that the situation at present is unsatisfactory.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, bearing in mind the many letters received from our electors dealing with this bill, which to our mind is clearly detrimental to Canadian workers, specially during the high unemployment period we are now going through, the like of which we have not seen since 1930, and here I am thinking specially of the province of Quebec where unemployment is rather endemic and where employment lasts for about six to ten weeks, which of course places that category of workers at a disadvantage, on behalf of my party and all Canadian workers, we support the motion of the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) to the effect that amendment No. 30 should be discussed further to allow every group to express itself more freely and pass that bill, though we are against changes which would allow each and everyone to say what he thinks.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Order. Of course, the question—