

Regional Development Incentives Act

the minister and his department. I suggest that he get together with the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin), the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) and the minister responsible for the Wheat Board in order to solve some of our basic problems. If some of these problems were solved, there would not be as much unemployment nor as great a need for regional development in the province of Saskatchewan.

I am not sure why the area I represent does not qualify for aid under the regional development program. Geography alone should not determine whether an area is in need. A town, community or industry within a geographic area may have a very definite need for assistance or incentive program. The constituency of Battleford-Kindersley does not qualify for assistance because it is not in the region of the minister; we have to deal with our problems on another basis. There was the possibility of a vegetable-oil plant being built by a co-operative in North Battleford. When discussing this matter with the director of the co-operative, he informed me that a regional development or incentive grant would be of importance and would have a bearing on where the plant was built. I do not think that Saskatoon has a greater employment need than North Battleford. Is it suggested that people in North Battleford who are seeking employment should move to Saskatoon because it has been designated under the regional incentives program? I do not think that makes good sense.

If an industry wishes to settle in a particular area because of its proximity to the market or something of that nature, it should be given consideration. It takes issue with the section of the regional development plan which deals with this matter. The minister has already changed his mind with regard to some areas. Saskatoon and Regina are now designated areas. There has been no change with regard to the area that I represent. Perhaps politically we are not important enough, or the industry in that area is not important. Perhaps as a Member of Parliament I have not been making enough noise. If this is the case, my constituents have reason to complain.

I do not think the approach to solving these problems is adequate. I intend to deal with some aspects of the bill. It refers to the fact that those involved in the tourist industry may borrow money for that purpose. This does not apply to my area because it is not included in the regional incentives program. I do not think there is too much need for the government to erect buildings for tourists. If we had enough tourists in that area we could build the necessary hotels and motels. The primary reason for the slump in the tourist industry in the Prairies is the economy. This is an industry that should be considered for regional development. Frequently the areas that do not have industry are able to attract tourists.

I recall visiting the constituency of the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) south of Quebec City. The hon. member stated that a park should be built in the hills and mountains. It appeared that part of his riding would not be good for anything else. All the cattle were getting was exercise because there was not enough grass

[Mr. Thomson.]

on the land. As a person travelling in that constituency, I felt it was a fair tourist attraction. This is true of other areas that are not rich in industry.

The rural area of my constituency has some of the best farmland in Saskatchewan. In addition, there are two oil fields. Many city dwellers have not seen farming country and oil fields. This would be of interest to them. Promotion of the tourist industry in this area should be encouraged. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce should promote a program to see Canada first, or at least part of it. I have talked to many people in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal who hardly know that Western Canada exists, let alone having seen it. I suggest there is much to see in western Canada.

• (3:30 p.m.)

I further suggest that the federal government, and particularly the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, promote the tourist industry throughout Canada much more than they have hitherto, in the interest of national unity if for no other reason. In newspapers like the *Globe and Mail* and other rich metropolitan dailies you see ads saying, "Come to the Caribbean", "Come to Miami", "Come to Europe". These ads are placed by Air Canada and declare, "Come fly away with us". A package price is quoted for a tour. I should like to know whether Air Canada realize, when they encourage people to see things in Europe, that in fact they are importing unemployment. If they were to encourage residents of Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa to fly to British Columbia or somewhere else in western Canada, not only would Air Canada receive the air fare but they would put a few dollars in the pockets of Canadian tourist operators.

In this House there are several B.C. members who are very definitely tourist promoters. I observe the two hon. members across the way who have reached the ultimate in tourist promotion because I have heard them talk of the glories of B.C. But what have the departments of tourism of the governments of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia done to advertise the virtues of their respective provinces and to attract well-to-do tourists in eastern Canada who now holiday in Europe or some other country? I am not "knocking" a trip to Europe; indeed I would not mind one myself. But I suggest that many people who now go to Europe would visit western Canada if it were drawn to their attention that there were worth-while things to see there. I would challenge the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault) and the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle) to—

Mr. Pringle: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question at this point?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member might permit a question, but the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle) would have to ask it while in his seat.

Mr. Thomson: I shall talk for a moment or two more to give the hon. member time to resume his seat, when I should be happy to receive his question.