

Establishment of Industry Department

legislation. Then it was also amended in 1958 by a Conservative government. Here is an example of where a government dealing with this problem has done so effectively and in such a way that the public had a good idea of precisely what was going to be done.

The bill passed in 1945 consisted of 15 short sections of which perhaps five contained the kernel of the recommendations that had been made. To the extent that my studies have enabled me to come to a determination, it would appear that the legislation has worked fairly well. The remarks I am making now might well have been made on second reading of the bill but after bills are introduced it is, of course, difficult to persuade governments that they have made a mistake. I suggest to the minister and his colleagues that before the bill is brought in it would pay them to take a long and careful look at the legislation and the debate which accompanied second reading of the bill in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, and that they should also look at the amendments of 1950 and 1958. I make this suggestion because here was a situation where the recommendations which would guide the deliberations of the body charged with responsibility for this particular program were brought out into the open in clear, definite and precise terms, quite contrary to what the situation will be, as I see it, if the proposals made by the government here are proceeded with.

The United Kingdom legislation contained precise terms under which an agency could function. The authority was vested in an existing department, and I call this fact to the attention of the minister. The department which was clothed with the responsibility was the board of trade which, of course, corresponds to our Department of Trade and Commerce. The president of the board of trade was the minister who was charged with carrying into effect the terms of the legislation and reporting to parliament. He was given guide lines, he was given directives, so that he and his officials knew precisely how they could operate. What is more important, the members of parliament and the public knew precisely what could be done.

The situation here, Mr. Chairman, I submit is entirely different. The economic council of Canada may formulate plans and study. As I said before, these studies will be conveyed to the commissioner or deputy commissioner of the area development agency. The deputy commissioner or commissioner will then have the responsibility, in the words of the Prime Minister, not for the implementation of the suggested plans but simply for co-ordination. As I understand it this is the nomenclature for trying to persuade other departments of government to

implement these studies or plans. I believe this is the difficulty. The commissioner will not participate to any extent in the formulation of the plans. He will not participate in the execution of these plans, and the members of this house will have no idea of the precise intention of the government in its attempts to render assistance to these areas of Canada which need assistance.

As I say, there are but one of two conclusions at which we can arrive in assessing the value of this legislation. It is either window dressing and of no value, no purpose except the political purpose of implementing a pre-election promise or else it is the vesting in several departments of government, operating without any guide line, of an opportunity to interfere in the industrial and economic life of this country. This interference will not take place under the terms of any statute which has been seen by the members of this house, which has been debated by the members of this house or approved by the members of this house. Unless there is an amendment to the resolution or unless there is something in the act which is entirely different from the concept in the resolution this will do nothing except create the commissioner and deputy commissioner of development areas whose functions and duties will be formulated by executive decision. This, I submit Mr. Chairman, is not the type of measure the people of this country desire for dealing with this problem.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Chairman, the importance of this resolution has now been brought to the attention of the house as a result of some very able speeches, two of which we have heard within the last few minutes. The hon. member for Bow River dealt with the subject of the increased emphasis on the development of bureaucracy and the hon. member for Peace River has shown that the resolution is faulty in its concept. I propose, Mr. Chairman, to deal with this resolution because I think it is the function of an opposition to examine with the greatest care the legislative measures which are placed before the House of Commons. My experience here indicates that if legislation has been carefully conceived and carefully presented, there is not much loss of time in getting legislative measures through the house.

On the other hand, if legislation is hastily brought forward, trouble occurs. This is the situation with regard to this resolution. When we first glanced at the resolution some time ago, it seemed to make some sense. It was obviously drafted to correspond with an election promise that was made during the campaign. There is widespread and proper interest in the development of industry in this country, and widespread and proper interest in the