

they are contained in an article by Marion H. Bryden.

Mr. Nasserden: Very misleading.

Mr. Andras: During the last few years, however, the government has introduced major measures of social reform, such as the Canada assistance plan, the income supplement for the aged, medicare and so on. I personally am proud we have done these things. I think they were long past due. They were badly needed, and there are further measures in this general area of social progress which we should consider in due course.

• (8:50 p.m.)

At the same time, going back to the opinion expressed a few moments ago, there is an economic base from which all these blessings flow, and we have to protect that base. The time has now come for us to stop and temporarily digest the social reform measures we have passed, so as not to overload the economy. It is time now to turn to the theme and to the priority, and for a short period at least as a government to concentrate our investments into economic development, and let the gross national product grow so that the tax base is increased. Then we can afford to move ahead on other needed measures of social reform.

One of these procedures in investment in economic growth, that of regional economic development, has to take place in a much more comprehensive form than exists presently. One can look at the growth of certain sections of the country and see how quickly they are expanding and then turn to other sections and see how slowly their rate of growth is proceeding. Something should be done in such a situation. The urban centres such as Toronto and Montreal—and we could name others—are pyramiding development in their own areas, while other sections of the country are lagging behind.

In particular the province of Ontario requires close examination in terms of sub-provincial regional economic development. Ontario is recognized as a "have" province. The statistics of economic performance in Ontario are standouts, so far as the country as a whole is concerned. But Ontario is a vast province. It contains many different kinds of regions, and there are many different economic regional activity levels in it. There is a wide disparity between the growth rate in the northern part of the province and the tremendous development taking place in Toronto and the golden horseshoe, extending

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down to Niagara, Windsor and back to Toronto.

The situation in that southern area of Ontario—and I say this without any attempt to be facetious or critical—is creating so many problems and demanding so much of the attention of the Ontario government that it simply cannot afford to devote sufficient energy, time, effort and money to many of the other sections of the province in order to plan the kind of development that we want to see take place in those sections. In my opinion many other provinces, classified as "have not" provinces, have co-operated a great deal more than Ontario with the federal government, particularly through ARDA programs, in seeking stimulation for the economies of their various areas. In this respect I am thinking of provinces like Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Manitoba. I speak with particular concern about this matter because of the situation in my constituency and in my area of northwestern Ontario. We would be incorrect if we were to describe this as a disaster area. Up to the present time we have continued to enjoy reasonable levels of employment, but it is a slow growth area.

With this thought in mind, some 18 months ago I made a number of specific recommendations for the framework of an economic development plan for the area. I negotiated these recommendations with the federal government. The response was encouraging, and I got written approval from the minister of forestry (Mr. Sauvé) that ARDA, under the federal administration, would assist in financing the kind of research that had to go into it. Simultaneously with these negotiations with the federal government, I spoke with many people at Queen's Park and in the Ontario government. While the approval came from the federal government many months ago, apparently I have not been a good enough spokesman to move the Ontario government to any action whatever. I say this in a non-partisan way because in the province of Manitoba, which enjoys a Conservative government, as does Ontario, the exact opposite has been the case.

Mr. Reid: May I ask the hon. gentleman from Port Arthur a question. Does he know of any other plan which the Ontario government has undertaken, under ARDA or any other program assisted with federal money, that would be comparable to what he has proposed?