

The Address—Mr. Lachance

known to us all, this is an area that has been neglected in this regard and has been omitted from designation.

I am concerned about this, as is the local chamber of commerce and the local city council, and I feel that some corrective measure needs to be taken. When I asked for an explanation as to why the city of Portage la Prairie was left out of designation, a letter from the Area Development Agency said in part:

—employment in Portage la Prairie has been at a rate of more than 50 per cent greater than the employment growth in the Canadian economy as a whole—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allowed for his speech has expired.

Mr. Enns: I will just be a few moments, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Is it the wish of the house that the hon. member shall have time to conclude his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Enns: Thank you for your courtesy, Mr. Speaker, I simply wanted to bring home the fact that an explanation given by the Area Development Agency seemed to state that we were enjoying a rate of growth 50 per cent greater than the rest of the country. We were completely nonplussed by that explanation because any figures available to us certainly do not bear this out. Therefore I asked the minister last December just where the supporting figures came from that led him to make that kind of statement, and in a letter dated January 7 over the signature of the Minister of Industry there is this surprising sentence:

These figures are from official but not public records—

Looking at figures obtained from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, employment section, labour division, catalogue No. 72.002, it is seen that wages paid to employees in the city of Brandon, for example—which is a designated area—for the last three years have been consistently higher by some \$5 to \$10 per week than has been the case in Portage la Prairie.

Despite this, Portage la Prairie is not a designated area, and Brandon is. I wish to draw to the attention of the minister that the city council believes this to be discrimination, because an article appeared in the *Daily Graphic* of Tuesday, January 18, bearing the

bold headlines, "‘Discrimination’ says City Council". The article reads in part:

A charge that the community of Portage la Prairie is being discriminated against in not being listed as a designated area, as are other parts of Manitoba, was levelled in city council committee Monday night.

This charge was made by Mayor H. L. Henderson who said it has now become "a program of discrimination, not a program of help". I believe that the strongest words of protest must be lodged against the department for this type of action with regard to an area that we in the province of Manitoba consider should be designated, because the peculiar situation in Manitoba is that over half the population lives in one metropolitan centre. There is no other province with this problem. Therefore the location of industries and employment opportunities are dominated by this one metropolitan area. Thus, areas not benefiting from the federal grants program are under a severe handicap.

I will conclude, Mr. Speaker, by admonishing the government to bring forward constructive legislative proposals so that we on this side of the chamber and indeed the whole house, can contemplate, develop and pass legislation that will earn for Canada the rightful place that is ours for the asking in this modern world.

• (9:00 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. G. C. Lachance (Lafontaine): Mr. Speaker, ever since the hon. member for Stormont (Mr. Lamoureux) was selected to preside over the debates of this house, the unanimous tribute paid to him here and across Canada is evidence of the esteem and confidence he is enjoying. I am pleased to join this laudatory concert to congratulate him and offer my full support. To the Deputy Speaker and chairman of committees, the hon. member for Humber-St. George's (Mr. Batten) and to yourself, in your capacity as Deputy Chairman of Committees, I offer my best wishes for success and my most sincere congratulations.

I wish every success to the mover and the seconder of the address in reply to the speech from the throne, the hon. member for Dollard (Mr. Goyer) and the hon. member for York-Scarborough (Mr. Stanbury), and congratulate them on the clear, restrained and intelligent manner in which they performed their task.

Mr. Speaker, the speech from the throne invites us to a hearty meal; if all the dishes