

Regional Development Incentives Act

many lines that have to be gone through, and so many complexities in making applications, that the success of the program will be jeopardized. The greatest waste of all would be to fail in the course of the next four or five years to develop self-generating growth in those areas of Canada the minister hopes to help. That will be the greatest failure. I do not urge the minister to throw away public moneys carelessly, but he should try to establish simple rules so that people may see where they fit. Only in this way can the program succeed.

If someone happens to get his hands on a few thousand dollars or even on a million dollars he may not really need, I do not think we should worry too much. After all, the government can recover that money eventually through taxation. Provision could be made for such capital to be carried on the books of a company in a way that will stop that company claiming any depreciation on that capital. I am not suggesting that the government should give away public money needlessly; I am only suggesting that eventually the money will be recovered. I also suggest as strongly as I can that there is a need for decisions to be reached as quickly as possible so that everyone may know as quickly as possible where he fits. Bottlenecks must not be allowed to develop, or the program will fail. I say that as earnestly as I can.

• (3:10 p.m.)

There are many definitions and declarations in the bill. I do not know what they mean. They should be defined as rapidly as possible at the committee stage and if that is not possible, by the minister. What exactly is meant by a plant being in commercial production? The operators of a plant become entitled to certain aid only when the plant goes into commercial production. The industry will want a clear definition of commercial production before it goes into a scheme of this sort. A plant operator will want to know exactly and precisely the conditions upon which the payment will be fully available. What is meant by a new product? What is meant by a significant contribution? There are many items of this sort which should be clarified as much as possible. I assume the committee will give these matters very close attention. Admittedly, they do not concern the principle of the measure and, therefore, I will not dwell on them at this time.

While I have been suggesting today there are dangers in the minister having too much discretion, danger in the lack of clarity in the

standards to be established, there are some respects in which the bill may be too limited in its scope. I think the minister should consider embracing within the terms of this kind of measure certain types of service industries. He should consider, for example, the tourist industry. I presume the minister can help a particular tourist establishment under his general legislation. I assume this is the case, but in most of these areas in which the minister will be interested, the tourist industry is likely to have a very substantial potential for growth. It is likely to be very important to the development of the region. The minister will probably agree this is so, but he will probably say he can take care of it under the other legislation. Is the minister prepared to consider on an ad hoc basis an application from every builder of a motel, for example, in a designated area such as the Atlantic provinces? On the other hand, is the minister going to set forth some clearly defined rules so that those involved in that industry know what help, if any, is going to be available to them?

I hope the minister will very seriously consider including service industries, such as the tourist industry, that are clearly related to growth in this concept of development. Having done this, I hope he will proceed to provide clear rules as rapidly as possible so that we will not have a bottleneck develop because every application has to be processed from scratch.

I think the minister indicated this assistance would probably not be available to certain types of primary industries or industries involved in the initial processing such as processing of raw materials in an area. I do not know precisely what that means. For example, is fish a raw material in an area? Does this mean a plant involved in processing fish for the market would not be entitled to this kind of assistance? I do not know. This type of situation should be clarified because it could be, and frequently is, one of the best potential sources of growth in a particular region. The same can be said of forest products as well. Someone may say there is not much employment provided by a pulp mill. There is a great investment of capital, perhaps \$40 million or \$60 million, and only 300 to 400 men are employed. However, there are also many men employed in the woods and in industries required to service such a mill and its employees. There are many sections of the country where the minister will be concerned with this kind of work. Work in the woods will perhaps be the most suitable kind of