

Grants to Designated Areas

on the occasion of every future change, the change will be for the better. I think we will be taking a great step along the road to co-operation in helping these areas of slow industrial growth if each and every Member consults with his local industrial commission and municipal council in order that at this level of Government there will be greater understanding in this field. If that is the case, I am sure that when we come back to discuss the criteria and regulations in the Committee we will truly be able to do what the Prime Minister has said is needed.

● (7:40 p.m.)

He has said that the importance of the present proposals lies in the fact that Canadians living in areas where jobs are most needed will have a better chance to improve their lives because of the scope of this program providing for constructive industrial development and improved skills. I hope we can make this come to pass and bring about a redistribution of industry that will provide an equal opportunity to areas in all parts of this country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I have only a few words to say about section 1 of the bill on designated areas. I would call the Minister's special attention to the condition governing grants for the development of industry in designated areas, because we know from past experience in my county that, in recent years, certain areas have not been designated. What I find strange is that our area was designated for winter works, we have received winter works grants as a designated area, yet when it comes to setting up new industries or allowing grants for new industries, we find that our area is no longer designated. It is on this specific point that I wish to draw the Minister's special attention, because he told us that these new areas would be designated at the time of the federal-provincial conference of provincial prime ministers. Therefore, I want to inform him of one thing: there are, in constituencies such as mine, factors which will completely change the report of the national unemployment service.

From what I see, statistics provided by the national unemployment service constitute the main basis for the designation of areas. In my constituency, there are two offices of the national unemployment service. The statistical data of the office in the north are very exact, and this area is desig-

[*Mr. Peters.*]

nated both for winter works and for assistance to industries. On the other hand, in the south, the designated area, Roberval and St. Félicien, the unemployment office, which is located in Roberval, cannot give a true picture of the region for the good reason that the big towns of Chibougamau and Chapais are not part of the economy of the area, but come under the national unemployment office in Roberval. This results in a very large labour surplus registering at the Roberval office. The statistics of the Roberval office show that this region seems more prosperous than it really is, because Chibougamau and Chapais are industrial centres where unemployment is extremely low. If the minister will only take my remarks into consideration, I suggest that these two towns be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Roberval office and that another unemployment office be set up for the towns of Chapais and Chibougamau, with a view to finding out exactly what the labour and unemployment situation is in each region.

I am told that, as a result of redistribution, the towns of Chapais and Chibougamau will be incorporated in the Roberval constituency. If so, three unemployment offices should be set up, at all costs, in order to have three separate regions and to do justice to each one of them, because when the statistics of the Roberval office are sent to Ottawa, they include the towns of Chapais and Chibougamau. Then you are under the impression that those towns are located two or three miles from the Roberval office, but the fact is that they are 155 miles away from the Roberval office and are separated by more than 135 miles of virgin forest. That is why I maintain it is impossible logically to include those two urban centres in the Roberval and St. Félicien district. The minister is aware of that situation, because in recent years we have been in touch with him in order to get grants for the winter work performed in those two towns. We are proud of having them in our constituency, but we are not so proud to see people in our area deprived of grants that would normally be paid to them.

A few industries will most likely settle in St. Félicien; a pulp and paper mill, for instance, could have taken advantage of those grants, but the problem was there. I met the municipal authorities of St. Félicien who explained the problem to me. "We cannot get the grants because this is not a designated area", they said. I am sure this can be dis-