

Supply

because that is the kind of federalism I am sure he would like to see.

We have had some successes from which I think the provincial government could learn. First, the "Buy North" program announced by the provincial government two years ago in northern Ontario has had a sluggish beginning and still is having some difficulty in getting under way.

The federal government has a procurement program that has been working very well. Officials from the Government of Canada have been going through northern Ontario trying to find people to bid on federal government work. In fact, there will be a special symposium for this in May to be held in Ottawa. We will bring suppliers from northern Ontario to Ottawa to show their skills and wares here. We have been off the mark very quickly and very intensively to make sure that FEDNOR works from the point of view of procurement.

The hon. member for Kenora—Rainy River will be very interested to know that the chairman of FEDNOR is not somebody from London, Ontario, or Ottawa. He is from Hudson, Ontario, which is just outside Kenora. The chairman of FEDNOR has an understanding of northern Ontario, and an understanding of working with provincial governments, something which has helped this program immensely.

We have tried not only to deal with the hundreds of applications, we have also tried to make FEDNOR adaptable and supple when a crisis occurs. There is no way that FEDNOR can answer the whole problems of a mine closing in Elliott Lake when over 1,000 people are put out of work. There is no way a small business agency like this can totally answer that problem.

We have moved, for example, with considerable despatch in Timiskaming. The hon. member for Timiskaming has spoken often in the House of the problems they face, such as the closing of sawmills and mines. It has been really quite acute in the Timiskaming region which has been suffering unemployment of over 15 per cent in the last few years. We have put a special FEDNOR task force in place there. We have tried to speed up applications from that region to make sure that the Timiskam-

ing region can be dealt with. We have put dozens of projects in there in the last two years. We have created hundreds of jobs. Just a month ago I announced a very important contribution to the Pyrok Company and the Diamond Lake Company. There are also certain offices of Veterans Affairs moving to Kirkland Lake. FEDNOR has sort of helped be a catalyst for this.

• (1520)

I would like to say to my hon. friend, the member for Algoma, that we are going to try to do the same thing with Elliot Lake. Next week we are going to have a special subcommittee of the FEDNOR board chaired by my hon. friend, Leo Bernier, who is going into the Elliot Lake region to see what we can do there.

Ordinarily, Madam Speaker, one might think that this is window dressing. But when you see how that particular approach worked in the Timiskaming area, you have to believe that it holds promise as well for Elliot Lake.

When I take a look at the Elliot Lake infrastructure, it is a magnificent one. It was really built to be a larger city and to house an even larger population than it has now. I think it has potential if we look at it carefully. We will do studies, together with entertaining small business proposals for that area.

I know the member for Kenora—Rainy River who spoke on this motion this morning is interested in tourism. He is somewhat negative about tourism. He does not think that we should put an emphasis on tourism in the FEDNOR program.

In fact, I announced over \$8 million to the new tourism additional program before the end of the year. It has been very well received. He should speak to the northern Ontario tourist outfitters, for example, which has been very much in favour of this program.

The reason why we have added a special program for tourism to FEDNOR is this. We find in northern Ontario, northern Quebec and northern Manitoba—the northern part of this great country of ours—that we have to diversify the economy. It is absolutely overlooking an immense potential of Canada to overlook the great opportunities for tourism.