

National Location of Industry Council

house. If the government would listen to them and co-operate, a good measure of improvement could be obtained in a very short time.

Of course, I know those are but provisional measures and that industrial development only may compensate and bring about stability which not only will last, but will go on improving, thus ensuring to the different areas of the country and of the province a normal development and jobs which will make it possible for the population to get what it needs.

I know that in so doing, the government is once again asked to set up boards and to impinge upon a field which, normally, should be reserved to the provinces. But we have come to the point where it is to be wondered whether the present economic situation in Canada is not the result of a concerted action, of a comprehensive over-all plan to force the provinces, the municipalities, in other words the citizens themselves, to crawl to Ottawa on their knees to beg favours.

I know that other provinces of Canada do not have to face such a serious problem, from the standpoint of unemployment, because they have probably benefited from what we could call a better understanding on the part of the federal government. For instance, Ontario is in a privileged situation. In fact, I think that if we compare its situation with that of the other provinces, we note a centralization of industry.

I do not know whether I can take the liberty of making the following remarks, but the national productivity council, which is a body set up by the government to promote production in manufactures and other related enterprises, is now composed of 25 members, the majority of whom are citizens of Ontario.

I would not like, at this stage, to criticize the attitude of the members of that board, but I think it is normal, after all, for people living in the same province, to understand better the problems of that particular province and to understand less those of the country as a whole.

I feel that such a situation must be brought to the attention of the other representatives we see in this house, because the Quebec members are being accused of complaining about discrimination. In my opinion, the representatives of the other provinces should study closely the membership of the various crown corporations and agencies which are in majority composed of citizens from Ontario. Consequently, it is no wonder that all measures put forward by the government are made up to fit the needs of the province of

[Mr. Lessard (Lake St. John).]

Ontario. And those measures are far from taking into account the needs of the eastern provinces, the maritime provinces in particular, which also suffer from that situation.

Mr. Speaker, if provincial governments had greater freedom of action in the field of taxation, if they had their own revenues, I think that a good number of the problems facing the federal government would be solved. In fact, the provincial authorities could take those problems in charge themselves and solve them. But since they do not have the necessary revenues, they must constantly address themselves to the central government, and I think we are rendering a disservice to confederation and to good understanding in this country in forcing them to come regularly on a pilgrimage to Ottawa in order to obtain, piecemeal, those things to which they are entitled and which belong to them, as a result of the prerogatives which have been conferred to them under the agreement.

Of course, all those boards may have some good effects. They will probably limit certain freedoms, which are dear to us but, unfortunately, I think that, considering the ill-will of some, we are sometimes obliged to sacrifice those parts of our freedom, always hoping that someday we will be able to recapture them, in justice and in peace.

We therefore support this measure for the good that it may bring about.

(Text):

Mr. W. H. A. Thomas (Middlesex West): Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting and worthwhile resolution which has been placed before the house by the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters). If we did not have a great many other proposals before the house dealing with the subject of planning and the manner of spreading our productivity and the rewards of that productivity equitably across the country the resolution might be welcomed more by the house at this time.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It now being six o'clock, the time appointed for the consideration of private member's business has expired and the house will revert to the business that was interrupted at five o'clock.

NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

PROVISION FOR DEFINITION OF DUTIES,
APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS, ETC.

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Nowlan for the second reading of Bill No. C-87, to provide for the establishment of a national economic development board.

At six o'clock the house took recess.