

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It is the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the third time and passed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS— MOTIONS

[Translation]

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN INDUSTRIAL DECLINE OF EAST MONTREAL

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie) moved: That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should consider the advisability of intervening in the matter of the industrial decline of the eastern sector of Montreal by designating the said area (Zone 4), and by granting contracts to Versatile-Vickers, Bombardier, C.S.W. and other endangered industries.

He said: As you have just mentioned, Mr. Speaker, this is a positive, not a negative motion. It invites all the Members of this House to ask the Government to help the people of Eastern Montreal who, for various reasons, have been affected by industrial closures.

First, I would like to give some background of the events in Eastern Montreal. Following the announcement of the closure of the Gulf refinery, of Bombardier, of the Vickers shipyards, of Canadian Steel Wheel, of Canadian Foundry, of SKD and of Daoust, and at the request of the Bombardier people and my colleague for Papineau (Mr. Ouellet), certain Liberal Members, including the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) and the Hon. Member for Mount Royal (Mrs. Finestone), accepted to support the Bombardier workers in their representations to the Government to obtain contracts and avoid the closure of their plant.

Being a responsible opposition and at the request of my colleagues, we indicated to the Bombardier employees and all the other workers that, to avoid their efforts being viewed only as a protest, a Survival Committee for Eastern Montreal should be established to oppose the closure of these seven plants and the loss of 5,000 direct and indirect jobs. This Survival Committee was created eight months ago. It has had seven meetings. Last week, at its seventh meeting, we looked at the economic situation in Eastern Montreal. I would like to note that the members of the Survival Committee are mostly workers, representatives of the employees of these industries, citizens, representatives of the industrial community, representatives of the commercial association of Sidac Masson, and Eastern Montreal politicians at the municipal, federal and provincial levels.

Regional Development

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the representatives of the workers, such as Mr. Chouinard, Mr. Baril from the Gulf refinery, Mr. Beaubien from Vickers and Mr. Dugas who represented the workers of Bombardier, Canadian Steel Wheel and Canadian Foundry. Thanks to the work and efforts not only of the Survival Committee, but most important, of the employees and employers of these industries, we were able to avoid the closure of Bombardier. Instead of 450 jobs, there are now 650 at Bombardier, and the possibility of 100 more.

At Canadian Steel Wheel, there are still 200 jobs, and at Canadian Foundry, 100. This last industry is threatened. I have some solutions to propose.

Unfortunately, as concerns Versatile-Vickers, as of last week, 300 employees had lost their jobs in the space of three weeks, and the union president told me that, by July, the other 350 jobs would have disappeared if the Government did not take action to provide shipbuilding contracts for the company.

As concerns the Gulf refinery, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate some of the Conservative Members for their efforts, but unfortunately, the refinery is now closed. The whole country saw what happened. We even saw a Minister resign because of the decision of the Government, and another Conservative Member of Parliament has recently decided to resign and sit as an independant.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Rosemont (Mrs. Blais-Grenier) and the Hon. Member for Terrebonne (Mr. Toupin) on their dedication to the cause of helping the people of Montreal East.

Mr. Speaker, in looking back, if there had been no intervention by anyone at all in the case of Montreal East, we would have lost 2,370 jobs outright. We have been able to save or prevent the loss of 1,500 jobs which are still there today.

● (1720)

Regarding the matter of the Gulf refinery, Mr. Speaker, we owe a special word of thanks to the Government of Quebec and its Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Caccia) who, immediately after the federal Government's negative reaction, was alone in taking a positive stance and making representations to management, and at this very moment, there is a possibility of preventing the loss, of saving 100 jobs, and further negotiations are going on to save another 150 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, that is the situation today. In my speech this afternoon, I am speaking on behalf of the citizens of Montreal East, of several Members and municipal councillors from Montreal East and of the Liberal caucus—I am reminded of this by my hon. friend from Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme). I must say that at our last meeting, everyone agreed that as far as Montreal East was concerned, the federal Government had failed.