

Although it is passing strange—and perhaps if it were not so serious I could be more humorous about it—I suggest we will be faced with Bill C-205, amendments to Bill C-205 and amendments to other bills to help particular parts of this country. While it might be Quebec and Montreal today, it could be another part of the country tomorrow, unless this ministry starts to get tuned into the times and develops some viable constitutional policies which reflect the realities of this land. This is just a patch work job at best. How soon will it be before the Canadian people start to ask us if we are to provide particular funds to help particular parts of the country for various constitutional purposes. That is part of the gut issue in a bill that is anonymously called, an act to amend the Regional Development Incentives Act. We know we cannot continue in this unreal world much longer. We are not all the same. I am glad the minister is sponsoring this bill because if we can have the economic two Canadas which this bill would establish, then surely the minister would have some flexibility in respect of his dealings with his great friend and colleague the Prime Minister of this land.

Perhaps the minister could persuade the Prime Minister to adopt some flexibility in his constitutional stance, so that instead of having repeated constitutional discussions that accomplish nothing we could start to have the give and take of ideas that would reflect the realities of the land and our regional differences. I am not speaking about French or English and/or third force, but that is part of it. I say we are living in a dreamland if we believe this country is all the same. Quebec is different, and thank God it is different in so many ways. But let us not have this smokescreen that has polluted constitutional discussions, because unless we start to wake up and face reality we will have more bills such as Bill C-205. Surely, if the minister can set a precedent and, in effect, set up two Canadas economically, he can go to the Prime Minister and suggest that the Prime Minister be a little more flexible. I am not talking about a constitutional two Canadas, special status, associate status or deux nation. The good old Postmaster General can smile, Mr. Speaker. He may be smiling because he wished us all Christmas cheer and because there is to be a six-day delivery; thank God. But I suggest that so long as we legislators continue the sterile and puerile debate on semantic differences in respect of what we need in our constitution, we will be faced with the hard realities of provision such as we have in Bill C-205.

If there is any message which I would hope the minister would get from this debate, in view of all the apprehension I have about the principle of this bill, I would hope it would be to take the precedent which has been established by this bill to the constitutional discussions so that we could have some progress there.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It being six o'clock, pursuant to special order adopted by the House earlier today, the House will now rise to resume its work at seven o'clock.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

23568—70

Regional Development Incentives Act

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 7 p.m.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, we are debating amendments to the Regional Development Incentives Act. In other days when Canada was not plagued with such serious economic difficulties, the minister seemed to have a much more realistic concept of what he hoped to accomplish with this act. In Halifax in October of 1968 the minister said the following about the purpose of the Regional Development Incentives Act:

So let me emphasize my first principle. It is that we will not offer short-run expediency or long-run vagueness. We want to have constructive, practical, medium-length plans. We are going to plan for every possible effort for 15 years.

At that time the minister was proposing a plan which would help the slow-growth areas of this country which are in need. It was obvious then, and it is even more obvious today, that in the ordinary run of events—I am thinking in terms of the market economy—the slow-growth areas would not and could not get the kind of industry and economic development which they require to use their raw materials and human resources.

Therefore, since one could not expect private industry to go into those slow-growth areas because it could do much better in the golden triangle of Toronto, Hamilton and Windsor and in the Montreal and Vancouver areas, the Maritimes, eastern Quebec, eastern Ontario and parts of Manitoba simply could not do without the kind of programs which were proposed under the Regional Development Incentives Act. But now we have a different situation from that of October, 1968, when the minister made those remarks which I quoted. Today we are faced with major unemployment. There are almost 500,000 unemployed and by February, 1971, the figure will probably rise to 800,000. Almost 40 per cent of that figure, Mr. Speaker, is concentrated in the province of Quebec.

• (7:10 p.m.)

When the minister suggests that members of this House from any party who criticize this bill and the proposals he is making, do so because they are anti-Quebec, he is not only being unfair but is doing a disservice to that province. I think it is fair to say that there is no Member of Parliament who does not realize that the problems of Quebec are so serious, with the unemployment and poverty there, that they must be solved. Unless they are solved, this country will not survive.

Mr. Caccia: I wonder when—

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, the backbenchers who are only here to vote when their fuhrer or leader tells them to—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Orlikow: —do not need to object as the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) is endeavouring to do. If he wants to speak, he can do so later. I do not think I have taken very much time and I do not need any