

how pressed we are for time in this House. I also know that the act before us is not strange to most hon. members. It, therefore, needs little introduction on my part. However, I would like to explain why the government is seeking an extension to the Regional Development Incentives Act at this time.

While I suggested that most of you are familiar with the program of incentives to industry of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, applicable in the slow growth regions of Canada, I am equally sure many of you are less familiar with the fact that there is an expiry date to the legislation covering this program. Under the current legislation, assistance is limited to projects which go into commercial production by December 31, 1981. The fact that the current legislation will expire in 18 months, unless we do something about it, is already having an adverse effect on DREE's industrial incentives program.

Large scale projects take time to develop, time to plan, as they involve millions of dollars, time to build facilities and time to reach commercial production. We are running out of time. DREE officials already are having to reject applications because proposed projects will not come into production by the end of the year 1981. I need not tell any of my colleagues in this House what this means to those parts of Canada where this development would have taken place. These areas of our country need the kind of industrial development this program has brought about. That is why you are being asked to extend the Regional Development Incentives Act for five years.

In the past ten years the industrial incentives program has generated more than \$2 billion of development by private enterprise, and is expected to generate another \$2 billion from projects still under way. Some \$4.3 billion worth of development has been brought about, or will occur, through \$800 million in federal government incentives.

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With these incentives the Government of Canada has brought investment dollars to those parts of the country where they are really needed. And, probably more importantly, we have created jobs with these incentives. Almost 150,000 actual or projected long-term jobs can be attributed to projects supported by DREE's industrial incentives program. That is to say nothing of the many thousand of jobs indirectly created or maintained which, while they cannot be calculated, are nevertheless equally real.

This legislation cannot wait until the comprehensive review of DREE is completed and a legislative package can be placed before the House for consideration. As I said earlier, we cannot wait until then. The new DREE legislation may be introduced some time in the autumn of this year. I can tell hon. members that the minister and the ministry are working diligently to fine tune with precision the new legislative program and that we will all have an opportunity to debate the proposed legislation for the over-all operation of DREE when it is introduced.

However, with respect to Bill C-35, we have a successful program with proven effectiveness, but unless we act swiftly, it

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will quickly cease to be so. The reason that it is necessary to extend the act for five years can be briefly explained by illustrating some of the requirements. As I mentioned earlier, the planning of a project, including a feasibility analysis and location studies, can take one year or two. Construction of the plants and installation of the equipment can take another 18 months to two years. Add to this a further three or four months of running until commercial production is reached, and I am sure that all hon. members will agree with the reasons for which we are requesting an extension of time.

The passage of the amendment to the Regional Development Incentives Act which is before us at this time will permit the continuation of a program that is a powerful weapon in the government's arsenal for the fight against regional disparity. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, I know from my work with the department how effective the regional development incentives program has been in promoting regional development in those parts of Canada where it is most needed.

As a representative in this House of one of these areas, I know from first-hand experience the impact this program can and does have. I have seen that it does help to create job opportunities and encourage capital investment. In my province of New Brunswick alone, more than 10,000 jobs can be directly related to RDIP assisted projects. In addition, the program has generated investments of almost \$290 million, investments by private industry which can help maintain the viability of our communities. This last point is an important one to me: this program has meant that there are both jobs and economic development where they are needed, at home. People do not have to go down the road to some industrial metropolis to find work.

Regional development and the reduction of economic and social disparities are the goals of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. Through the regional development incentives program and the cost-shared, federal-provincial activities under the general development agreement, as well as other programs, DREE is working to meet these objectives.

The regional development incentives program is, as I have said, but one of the instruments at DREE's disposal for fighting regional disparities. However, it is an important one, for through it the department can work directly with private enterprise and promote development which can have meaningful results for the millions of Canadians living in those parts of the country that are designated as requiring special assistance—meaningful results such as those I mentioned when I spoke of the program's achievements in my home province of New Brunswick.

These kinds of results can be seen all across our country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In the Atlantic region more than 29,000 jobs are expected from the RDIP assisted projects with investments totalling almost \$790 million. In Quebec 85,000 jobs and investments of \$2.3 billion have been created. In northern Ontario, almost 12,000 jobs have been created with investments of \$468 million. In western Canada and the north there have been almost 25,000 jobs created with invest-