

Investment Canada Act

to develop our resources and create the jobs that are in such dire need.

In any case, as far as the Liberal Party of Canada, the Official Opposition, is concerned, let it be clear that we support foreign investments in Canada, let nobody fall for our opponents rhetoric, which would have people believe that we are opposing foreign investment.

• (1550)

[English]

As well, we want these foreign investments to be diversified and to come from several countries rather than one country. We do not want to be at the mercy of legislation passed south of the border that could be detrimental to us. We advocate more investment but from more countries. That is the policy of the Liberal Party of Canada.

[Translation]

Therefore, let us stop accusing one another. And as the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) who spoke before me has suggested that Bill C-15 was superficially appealing, I would suggest for my part that it is a rather superficial piece of legislation. Indeed, this is the reason why my party has introduced a motion to postpone discussion on this Bill, to give the Government a chance to review the problems that must be solved if we want Canada to attract more foreign investments, and especially to make sure that such investments will be in the interest of Canadians. No doubt that some reflection will help the Government introduce a more comprehensive piece of legislation, reconsider its rhetoric and realize that we will not attract foreign capital just by criticizing the previous government.

[English]

Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this assembly today for the first time to comment on the legislation which plans the creation of Investment Canada, as it is somewhat speculatively called, and on the motion to hoist this legislation for a six-month period. In doing so, since this is my first speech in the House of Commons, I should like to take the opportunity to comment on my constituency and on several aspects of the parliamentary process that I feel are worthy of being on the public record.

Let me commence by paying tribute to my immediate predecessor, the Hon. John Reid, who represented Kenora-Rainy River for a period of over 17 years and whom I, eventually and at the third try, replaced here. One of my colleagues charitably says "third time lucky", but he knows as well as I do that luck is when preparation meets opportunity. It is that preparation upon which I will comment later.

Mr. Reid served his riding well, according to his lights and principles and certainly for a long time. He said that he had spent more than half of his adult life in this Chamber and that now he has the opportunity to spend his time in other pursuits.

I should like to pay tribute to his predecessor, the late Senator William Benidickson, who passed away a matter of

days ago and is survived by a very devoted and great lady, his wife Agnes. Mr. Benidickson served in this Chamber for nigh on 20 years and as a Cabinet Minister in several posts. He also had a great commitment to democracy, a great commitment to his legal profession and to the people of the Kenora-Rainy River riding.

For me it is an historic day in that this is the first time that a Member for Kenora-Rainy River has ever risen in the House from a seat any place other than on the benches of the Liberal Party. I stand to be corrected, but it may be that the campaign team that put me in this place broke the longest winning streak in Canadian political history.

The riding of Kenora-Rainy River is among the five largest in the country. It is the size of both Germanys put together. It has a population of nearly 80,000, which is spread out in an average density of one for every four square kilometres. For those of us who are not bilingual or bicultural, it is something less than one person for every square mile. They have a diversity of occupations which is truly incredible. It ranges from farmers to trappers, hunters, pilots, miners, lumberjacks and factory, plant, mill and railroad workers. There are many who are employed in the service of either the federal or provincial Governments and many who, like myself before coming to this place, were private businessmen or professionals in private practice.

I dare say that, with over 100 communities in an area the size of Germany, mine is one of the most diversified ridings represented in this Chamber and possibly also one of the hardest to represent.

During our recess—referred to so often and so inaccurately by journalists as a vacation—I personally travelled well over 5,000 miles in the service of my constituents. That is besides a two-week vacation during which I also travelled.

I should like to comment briefly on the ethnic background and make-up of my constituency. Most of this part of Canada was formally ceded to the Crown, formally recognized the sovereignty of the Crown, as late as 1929, 1930 and 1931. There are people alive today who remember the time when a large part of my riding was not part of Canada but was the sovereign territory of the Anishinabek, whose descendants still occupy it today.

• (1600)

It is a great privilege for me to represent the Anishinabek. Napich keechee-énandan kai-seck che-a-anee to-mou-ka anishinabek. I am grateful to them for their strong support. Ga-chee-enan-dan ka-ke wee-chee (ka-pou-tou) show-watch.

[Translation]

I also consider it a privilege to represent people of various linguistic groups, the Francophones in my constituency and people of Ukrainian, German, Dutch, and Polish origin, people from every European nation probably, from most nations in the world that are represented either by immigrants or descendants.