

Supply

industry in northern Ontario, the Maritimes and western Canada that relates to that particular training.

If you want to change the system and tell people in Toronto that they can go out and get another job, I could probably understand that. They do have an opportunity, when a plant closes, to walk across the street and at least have a fighting chance. When we lose a job because a mine shuts down or because a mill is gearing down because the price of pulp is no longer the same, as we are seeing in northern Ontario now, where do they go? I am not advocating that they move to Toronto or anywhere else because their families are there. That is where we live and that is where we want to stay. Some of the programs that were put in place by the previous government were there for a reason. They were not a handout as some of the people opposite would say, they were not a disincentive to work.

I would like to see those people across the way who said that in the last few days in the discussion over UI, go to their constituents and say: "You are a bunch of lazy bums and you do not want to work". He or she will not be in their seat very long, I can guarantee that. We want to work just like everybody else. The problem is that we have a lack of jobs, a lack of diversification of our economy. That is what regional development was supposed to provide.

• (1220)

Enter regional development programs. Before I was elected in 1988 I thought it was great that FEDNOR had been created, that the government finally realized that northern Ontario was a region with a problem, that it needed some economic help in order to diversify.

I will not talk in great length about the regional development programs in Atlantic Canada because I know the speakers following me on this side will speak in more detail and with more authority than I on that subject.

A subject that I know a lot about is FEDNOR. The chairman of FEDNOR happens to be a good friend. He is a man in whom I have a lot of faith. He must feel awfully down in the dumps because of what is happening with this particular program.

In the last budget the government decided to play with words. It decided to say that grants were now going to be repayable. Have you ever heard such a ridiculous statement? Repayable grants? If it is a grant, it is a grant. If it is a loan, then it is repayable. Those are the types of words that the members opposite are allowing bureaucrats to use to make it sound like there have been no changes to the regional development programs.

Let's get real. We can read. We may have a lack of diversification, but we do know how to read and we believe the government has given up on us again. It is going to cut those programs to a point where they will have no effect at all. I would have liked FEDNOR to be a tool for bringing secondary industry into northern Ontario, industry that has nothing to do with the resource base we have.

Tourism will be there. Forestry, if we are lucky enough to continue to plant trees, will still be there. Mining will still be there. We need diversification through secondary industry. That is what these regional development programs were supposed to be for, not to give Tory friends \$50,000 to add another cabin to their tourist camps. That is ridiculous.

Time never seems to be long enough when I get involved in something that means so much to me. I want to tell you why there has been a lot of disunity and intolerance, especially in places very close to home. These particular communities are just fed up. They have had it up to here. They have elected members of Parliament and that does not seem to work. They have kicked out members of Parliament on the opposite side because they did not do their job and it still does not work. So now they have started to take other measures that are unacceptable.

If members opposite want this country to stay together and be united, they have to start treating all regions of this country equally, they cannot just look at the bottom line of how many votes they can get in the next election.

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to the presentation of the hon. member for Kenora—Rainy River. I certainly understand, being a new member in the House only having been elected in 1988, that he has concerns. However, I must remind him that prior to 1984 his party was in power for about 20 years and I cannot remember