

*Export Credits Insurance Act*

wheat board in connection with sales of grain to China. We do feel, however, inasmuch as there is a taxpayers' liability of considerable consequence involved, we as their representatives in parliament are entitled, at the earliest opportunity, to the fullest possible information, and that we have not been getting.

Now, in connection with section 21B, I want to ask whether we are going to find, as we have found on three or four important occasions I could name, that after we have adopted the legislation of a particular minister, have passed his bill, he provides us with the annual report for a 12 month operation. We are then in a position where the information was not available to us when an important statute under his administration was under debate. Perhaps the obligation to report any transactions under this statute within 30 days will not be up until Monday. However, I should like some assurance from the minister that parliament has already been informed of all transactions during the recess under the Export Credits Insurance Act and, in addition, although he is not obligated to produce them, he has entered into no transactions under section 21, 21A or 21B since parliament convened?

**Mr. Hees:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I am glad to assure the hon. member that all transactions I enunciated yesterday—the four of them—have all been tabled.

**Mr. Benidickson:** Then I come to the point that before we proceed with the bill it would be appropriate to have some further explanations from the minister. I indicated with reference to capital goods that this phrase was informally used. Although I cannot find it in the statutes the words "capital goods" were used in the Auditor General's report but in addition, as the minister is well aware, the Auditor General who only takes sample checks—he does not by any means audit every account—as a result of certain sample or test audits reports that he found that under the machinery of operation under this act there had been a fraud perpetrated to the amount of some \$70,000. I think in his report he indicated that a claim was being made on the exporter who had been insured and who, under the insurance provisions, had received reimbursement from the government. Has the exporter acceded to the claim advanced by the government and has he repaid the \$70,000?

**Mr. Hees:** I am advised that there is nothing wrong with the exporter, and the agent abroad is being investigated at the present time.

**Mr. Benidickson:** Under its obligations our crown corporation did advance the \$70,000.

The Auditor General suggests that there was perhaps fraud on the part of some person to the extent of allowing the payment of \$70,000 and there is some question whether it should have been advanced—

**Mr. Hees:** I understand—

**Mr. Benidickson:** May I just finish one short sentence. I take it the crown corporation is perusing the recommendation of the Auditor General but it has not yet completed its request to the exporter for reimbursement of a payment that may not have been properly made.

**Mr. Hees:** That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Shall clause 1 carry?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Hees:** For heaven's sake.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I know the minister is impatient but he must remember that we in the opposition have a responsibility—

**Mr. Morris:** The same old line.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** We have the responsibility that the minister exercised when he was over here. The minister ought to remember that when he was in opposition he sought to discharge that responsibility with vigour and there were many occasions—

**Mr. Hees:** I would have been ashamed of myself if I had discharged it this way.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** —when he took a great deal of time. Now he is annoyed if members take time, but we recollect that the minister has set a very good example for us, an example which in some particulars we are seeking to emulate. I think the minister ought to take a look at the reply given by his parliamentary secretary to a question asked by the hon. member for Trinity. That question has not been put on *Hansard* during the course of this debate and maybe the minister has overlooked it. It was question No. 148 which asked:

1. How many items are presently on the export control list.

The answer was:

One hundred and seventy two numbered items.

That is the list which in section 3(a) is regarded as having a strategic nature, notwithstanding the denial today by the minister.

The question also asked:

2. Are any items on the export control list for the purpose of implementing an intergovernmental arrangement or commitment; and, if so, how many and what are they?

The answer was:

Yes, two numbered items.