

*Investment Canada Act*

In closing, I would say that we are going to oppose this Bill. We are going to suggest amendments to it and we are going to have a thorough examination of it, not only at second reading stage, which will take many, many months, but in committee as well.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Any questions or comments? If not, we shall resume debate.

**Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I am a little perplexed by the fact that none of the Government's supporters are interested in speaking on this debate. I would have hoped that, given the vital importance of the topic we now have before us, it would have generated a little more interest than apparently has been generated to this point in time. I say this recognizing that there are months ahead of us and that there will be ample opportunity by the end of March or early April for anyone who wishes to participate to do so. I do urge upon government back-benchers to remember, however, that the opportunity to give 20-minute speeches will, of course, run out and they will be restricted to making 10-minute comments come the end of February and into early March.

Having said that, I want to say that I doubt very much if, in the life of this Parliament, there will be another debate that will so clearly distinguish the policy direction of the Government from that which would be taken by the New Democratic Party.

● (1530)

I believe it is fair to say that in this debate alone there is a choice to be made. You can either believe with a sort of blind faith that an investor invests out of the goodness of his or her heart, taking into account all of the ramifications and consequences of that investment on other than themselves; or you can believe that an investor with a vested interest—which, of course, ties the two words together—invests in his own best interests and will pay only—cursory attention to the effect of his particular enterprise on those who might come into contact with it or be affected by it. I want to make it clear that I am not saying that investors do not care what happens to other people. I am sure they do on an individual basis. I am sure they do not like to see the kind of thing which has just occurred in India where thousands of people were killed or maimed or will suffer for the rest of their lives as a result of inadequate provisions for the protection not only of the workers inside the plant but of the community. I do not believe for one moment that the principals in that particular company consciously sat down and said, "We don't care what happens to those people". But what they did not do, and what they were not required to do, is to make that one of their primary considerations. They were not required to sit down and consciously factor into their costs the cost of providing the kind of environmental and human protection which would have guaranteed that such an occurrence could not take place.

I do not want to attribute to those people all of the worst possible motives. I attribute to them the motives which drive

them, that is, the desire to accumulate wealth. I personally do not share that desire, but I do understand that that goal drives a large number of people in our society and, in fact, it will be held by this Government and by others, not necessarily part of the governing party, as being a worth-while motive.

When one recognizes that that is the primary driving force behind the investor and those who make the decisions on behalf of investors, then one must put in place measures which will guarantee a level of behaviour by those persons which will be satisfactory to the community as a whole. It is interesting to note that investors put those kinds of measures in place to protect themselves from each other, to protect themselves in the stock-market from dealings which would perhaps otherwise result in actions which might be detrimental to the total investment community. What we are suggesting, following along on that example, is the necessity for Members of Parliament and for the Government of Canada to recognize what it is that motivates investors and to then make sure that we have in place the kinds of guarantees which will ensure that the public interest is also served by the investment which takes place.

I would like to say to the Government, Mr. Speaker, that if we are to lose investment dollars to another part of the world simply because that country is prepared to run risks with health, safety or the environment and it is not prepared to take into account the public good, so be it. If a company decides to move from Hamilton to Mexico—as did Allen Industries Canada Ltd.—because of the fact that it can get away with paying pitiful wages, it can get away without protecting the environment, it can get away without industrial accident protection, it does not have to pay unemployment insurance premiums and does not have to provide the benefits that the people of Canada have not only become accustomed to, but deserve, so be it. If an investor is prepared to invest his money elsewhere because he does not have to make those kinds of commitments to Canadians, he can bloody well invest his money elsewhere! That is fine with me. I am not interested in turning Canada into some economic backwater. I am not interested in seeing Canada drop back from the at least reasonably acceptable levels of protection for humans and for the environment which are established. I am not interested in providing an opportunity for someone to walk in with a handful of down-payment dollars, borrow the balance from Canadian banking and financial institutions, turn all of that into a tenfold profit, then put it all in his pocket and walk away. I am not interested in that. That does not help Canada and certainly does not provide anything of value. There is no lasting value in an operation which will put \$100,000 or \$100 million into Canada if its only purpose is to close the plant down, take the profits it was able to make and ultimately move back to where it came from or to some other part of the world, in order to begin the exercise all over again. I feel the Government has an obligation to consider that prospect. It has an obligation to try to understand that that is the way the system works.