

Export Development Act

of the fact Canada built 51 ships and financed them to the point of half a billion dollars.

I realize that I am referring only to the shipbuilding industry, but where does 200,000 jobs come out of that? It is a mathematical conundrum which I cannot solve. I am not saying that all those jobs were in the shipbuilding industry, but surely, having committed \$500 million to building ships for foreign merchant marines, you would think that at least the employment level would be maintained. Surely there would have been something left over in Canada in the way of permanent employment. No, the figures we are given—and I have reason to believe that they are drawn from the statistics produced by the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce to which EDC reports—demonstrate that as a result of this expenditure there was a drop of 1,000 jobs in the shipbuilding industry in Canada. How can we justify that sort of operation?

● (1642)

I would like to refine this a little bit more, but in doing so I am afraid I will have to introduce some confusion into the picture, confusion which I am not able to explain. I hope that one day the minister will be able to explain it. I would like to refer to the record so far as it relates to the contracts signed with France in the shipbuilding industry. This is drawn from the reports for 1971 to 1977, which contain a list of the contracts signed each year and the disbursements made each year. I find it totally confusing, but I think it is worth putting on the record. These are contracts for the building of vessels for France. It will be possible to correlate the dates with the figures which I gave earlier.

In 1971 contracts were signed with France for \$88.71 million, and in that year, since the contracts were just beginning to work themselves out, only \$1.53 million was disbursed. The next year contracts were signed for \$55.61 million, and in that year only \$2.28 million was disbursed. In 1973 contracts were signed for \$40.74 million, and \$11.67 million was disbursed. In 1974 contracts were signed for \$60.896 million, and \$34.510 was disbursed. What I cannot understand is that there seems to be some difference from year to year in the contracts in effect between France and Canada for the construction of these vessels. Now I come to the year 1975 when figures for the contracts signed and disbursements happen to coincide. In 1975 contracts were signed for \$60.248 million, and the disbursements were \$60.248. That works out, and the same occurred in 1976 when the contracts signed were for \$60.230 million and the disbursements were also \$60.230 million.

I think I mentioned in my earlier figures the number of vessels that were built for France in this program. I am glad that the people in the shipyards had these jobs, and I am not complaining about that. My argument is that these vessels should have been built for the Canadian merchant marine, and that the assistance which was granted to overseas purchasers should have been and should be available to Canadian enterprises if they are inclined to use it. The same number of ships, 51 ships, could quite as easily be flying the Canadian flag

[Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich).]

around the world, carrying Canadian goods from Canada and bringing imports back into the country. What does this mean in terms of our Canadian merchant shipping? I think the answer is obvious.

The following question also arises in my mind: what does it mean in terms of the Canadian maritime design capacity, or naval design capacity? What we have been doing—and I think this is the message we should extract from the figures that I have put on the record and the EDC's performance—is using Canadian welding techniques in Canadian shipyards, but we are contributing nothing to the technology that should be there and that was there, and that is part of Canada's tradition in shipbuilding. We are contributing nothing, and the EDC is contributing nothing to that distressing situation.

The Canadian naval maritime shipbuilding industry had been known for centuries until after the Second World War when it began to decline, and we are suffering as a consequence. Our shipbuilding and design capacities have withered and are in the process of disappearing as a result of the policies of this government to encourage the welding and putting together of a vessel according to someone else's design. What I fear is that this will be the history of our naval program: that we will go offshore to buy a design, to have it made up in a Canadian shipyard because it would be cheaper. Perhaps it would be cheaper in simple dollar terms in getting that hull on the waters and floating it, but would it be cheaper—and I insist that it would not—in terms of the development of the technology we should retain in this country?

I see, Mr. Speaker, that you are stirring uneasily in your seat. Perhaps I could come back to this later to develop this very important notion of the loss to Canada of the technology of marine design for civil and naval purposes.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be debated at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Roy)—Canadian Broadcasting Corporation—Celebration of Canada Week; the hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington)—Finance—Dumping duty on wide-flange steel beams; the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Friesen)—Finance—Dumping duty on wide-flange steel beams.