

Government Orders

As I have described, Bill C-93 will result in significant administrative savings and increased efficiency in the delivery of government programs and services to Canadians.

• (1050)

It reflects the government's commitment to ensure that tax dollars are not wasted on funding duplicated services or excessive administration. The bill makes sensible changes in a reasonable way while ensuring that the national interest is served. Accordingly I would urge my hon. colleagues to ensure speedy passage of this most important piece of legislation.

Mr. David Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Madam Speaker, I want to participate in this debate. I am anticipating that the Chair will rule in favour of my suggestion that the bill ought to be sent back to the drafters in order that it be brought back in its appropriate form.

Nevertheless, I wish to direct my comments to one aspect of Bill C-93 and that has to do with the amendments to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. In this particular bill, as has been referred to by the hon. member opposite, the Government of Canada will be shutting down Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation. This was an agency put in place to facilitate and enhance economic development on the island of Cape Breton. That was part and parcel of Bill C-103 which was introduced back in 1987.

For the benefit of the House and those who are viewing our proceedings, I wish to share with the hon. members opposite as well as other members in the Chamber the historical significance that individuals in Cape Breton believe Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation could play now and in the future.

Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation was supposed to assume the role and responsibilities of the industrial development division of the Cape Breton Development Corporation. History is important, for in studying history we can learn what we have done well and what we have done not so well.

In 1967 the Government of Canada at the behest of the then member for Cape Breton—Highlands—Canso, who now sits in the other place, presented a piece of legislation before the House of Commons to create the Cape Breton Development Corporation. At that time the coal industry was in massive difficulty. Unemployment was rampant on the island. Economic opportunities were practically non-existent.

As a measure of goodwill and to try to enhance real opportunities the government of the day and particularly that member who was a minister of the Crown introduced the Cape Breton Development Corporation. It had two divisions. One was the coal division, the second was the industrial development division.

The purpose of the bill I would like to read into the record. At that time it was succinctly defined by the hon. Allan J. MacEachen in the House of Commons when he spoke on the motion introducing the corporation's enabling legislation: "To acquire, reorganize and rehabilitate certain coal mining works and undertakings on Cape Breton Island, to conduct coal mining operations in the Sydney coal fields and to promote and assist the development of industry on Cape Breton Island to provide employment outside the coal producing industry and to broaden the base of the island's economy".

It had two divisions with its own president, its own board of directors and its own mandate. It is important to remember this for the purposes of debate. Devco has had some successes and it has had some failures. I do not think anyone in this Chamber would doubt that. Having the two divisions enabled those individuals who are involved in the coal mining sector to have some sense of security for their future and some hope as to where we might go.

Since we are specifically talking about industrial development, I want to share with members what my colleague, Senator Graham, said in the upper House on May 26, 1988 from the *Hansard* of the Senate, page 3500. He talks about the industrial development division:

The industrial development division continues to fulfil its mandate by doing what the coal division cannot do in many of those communities whose history and economy are deeply rooted in coal. Among other things, the industrial development division provides urban and industrial infrastructure, supports the entrepreneurial development programs and supports local self help organization. We must underline and emphasize that the corporation is not two separate divisions with two mutually exclusive mandates; in reality, the mandate and the direction are the same, to modernize and diversify the Cape Breton economy.

The corporate mandate may be protected in legislation, but it is corporate policy that determines the results. The Cape Breton