

Export Development Act

find the same names being used in no matter what part of the country you are, showing that the club is relatively small. But I am sure that the minister, with his experience in this field, would be able to find people without a conflict of interest.

I would strongly urge that the board of directors of the corporation do two things; that they stop using the corporation as a political and economic tool to direct the government of the country they are trying to help—they have been doing this for a considerable time in South America, and continue to do so—and that they give some consideration to doing something about the small companies that may be in other parts of Canada and that are not now being served by the corporation.

I have been pleased to have had the opportunity to meet some directors of a very large corporation from Japan who saw fit to come to Canada, not to make a profit but to come to a place in Manitoba where there is a major economic problem. They established a bicycle factory in Rivers, Manitoba, and employed mainly the local indigent population, mainly composed of Indians. They have been quite successful. It must make those Japanese proud to be able to say that they put some money into a country—and certainly we are not a poor country—to help solve some of the social problems in that country, unlike some of the activities of INCO, Brazilian Traction, Simard Beaudry, and other corporations which have been less than helpful in the countries where they have become established.

● (1550)

Mr. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo): My remarks will be very brief, Mr. Speaker, as I have just a few comments to make. My colleagues and I will be supporting this bill, but I do have some reservations about it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) on a point of order.

Mrs. Holt: Mr. Speaker, I rose to answer the hon. member who spoke previously, on his comment about my intervention. I should like to intervene, but if necessary I can wait until afterwards.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. The hon. member would be seeking the floor in order to participate in the debate. Another hon. member has already been recognized, so we would have to carry on with that member now.

Mr. Beatty: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member she will have an opportunity to make her remarks as mine will be very brief. As I started to say, my colleagues and I have reservations about this legislation although it is our intention to support it.

When the Federal Business Development Bank bill was before parliament I commented that the attitude of the federal government toward small business in Canada reminded me of a remark made by the late Adlai Stevenson to one of his political opponents. He said that particular gentleman was the sort of person who would cut down a redwood tree, and then mount the stump to make a speech on conservation. Certainly the legislation that the

government has brought before this House and the whole thrust of its activities with respect to business in Canada has done nothing to diminish the validity of that analogy.

If Canadians had any doubt about the priorities of the government as far as small business or big business is concerned, those doubts must have been raised further by now. The November 21 copy of the Minutes and Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs in Appendix A lists the top 51 beneficiaries of the Export Development Corporation. They account for \$1,528,500,000 of the total \$1,864,100,000 expended in corporate loans made by the Export Development Corporation.

I had the opportunity to review the list as I wondered what particular benefit the corporation's activities would be to my area, which is largely rural. The prime employer in it is small business. I was interested to note that the closest one could come to finding a business near my area that benefited from the Export Development Corporation was Canadian Westinghouse of Hamilton, and Babcock and Wilcox of Galt. Both are American owned companies and neither brings any particular benefit to the people of my constituency. Indeed it was interesting to note that a city the size of Kitchener-Waterloo or Guelph was not listed as receiving benefits.

The government will argue, as it has, on other occasions, that the suppliers for large corporations, the small businesses which supply their goods and services, will be secondary or tertiary beneficiaries of programs like this. To my way of thinking, Mr. Speaker, if we were trying to assign priority to taxpayer's money in my constituency, it would go to small business.

I am struck by the fact that according to the list of 51 top beneficiaries about half the money was given to foreign owned companies. Surely the priorities are wrong. If we are serious about trying to gain control over our economy, surely the taxpayer's money should be used to promote Canadian ownership rather than indiscriminately benefitting big business.

There is one other area that I should like to deal with briefly, and that is the government's rationale for getting into programs which give benefits to multinational corporations. I have had the opportunity over the last two weeks of doing some research into the subject of multinationals. One thing that is apparent to me is that even when the head office may be in the United States, multinationals do not owe allegiance to any country. They play one nationality against another.

I am disappointed that our country, far from showing leadership and trying to promote international co-operation so that a concerted attack can be made on the relationship between multinational corporations and the interests of other countries, has been participating in an auctioneering operation where we outbid other countries. I believe we should be changing our priorities, giving higher priority to Canadian small business, and I hope the government will consider this very seriously.

Mrs. Simma Holt (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I notice that the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) is a hit and run operator in this House.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Careful!