

Employment Support Bill

One of the strangest criticisms I heard of this bill during the debate was the suggestion that the government should be doing more than it is to extend our trading relations around the world. The suggestion was that we had somehow been remiss in concentrating so much of our trade in the direction of the United States. It is true we conduct a great deal of trade with the United States, but I cannot understand how any hon. member could be so utterly unaware of what has been going on during the past few months. I do not understand how any member could be unaware of the trade expansion program that the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce has undertaken, the new effort which has been made by the department to expand our trade with other countries of the world.

I remember a few years ago, when another government was in power, the leader of that government making an announcement to the effect that Canada intended to transfer 25 per cent of its trade with the United States to the United Kingdom. We all recall how the British came over with their order books ready to get the benefit of some of this expansion of trade, only to discover that it was all a pipe dream, a puff of smoke, nothing was meant by it. Hon. members opposite say that nothing has happened since then. Let me remind those who are unaware of some of the programs that the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce has undertaken even within the last few months to spread out our trading relationships throughout the world. For example, there was the trip to the Soviet Union in January and February of this year, a ministerial mission to expand our trading relationships and improve our technical exchange with the Soviet Union.

● (9:30 p.m.)

We sent a similar mission to the Federal Republic of Germany in March of this year. Then there was another one, of which some members may possibly have heard, which visited the People's Republic of China in June and July of this year. A science and technology mission went to Belgium in June, 1970. There was a follow-up technical mission to the Soviet Union in January, and one to Germany as well. We have a mission to Japan in the planning stages at the present time. These are some of the trading expansion and diversion programs in which we have been engaged, and I may say that they have shown some very positive results. Before too long the government will be making some more announcements of specific orders and new developments in trade as a result of these programs.

Perhaps hon. members may recall announcements made in the House concerning our intervention in the British negotiations to enter the European Common Market. Perhaps hon. members will recall that because of the interventions made by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp), Canada received special treatment from the European Economic Community in regard to Canadian pulp, newsprint and plywood exports. These concessions resulted from some very hard and capable work done by Canadian ministers to

ensure that Canada's interests in the Common Market were looked after.

Let me also tell hon. members about another Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce program that is designed to improve our trading relationships around the world. We have a fairs and missions program under which trade fairs and missions are sent to various parts of the world. In the past, the emphasis of these missions has fallen largely on the United States but that pattern is now changing and I should like to give the House some figures. In 1970-71 there were 18 events held in the U.S.A. and 28 events held in the rest of the world. In 1971-72 there were 19 events in the U.S.A. and 26 events in other parts of the world.

We also bring trade missions to Canada. In the two years 1969-70 and 1970-71 there were two from the United States and 53 from the rest of the world. These missions are staffed by people who come to Canada with order books to look at Canadian products and services, and they buy a great deal when they come. We encourage them to come, make them feel at home, show them around our country and encourage them to fill our order books, and that is what they do. So that is another of our trade expansion programs.

I could go on to give the House a long list of programs because there are many other countries in the world where we have benefited from our trade expansion efforts. However, let me say just a few words about our trade commissioner service. Although we do a lot of trade with the United States, dozens and dozens of trade commissioners are sent to other countries of the world with a view to expanding our trade. We have 75 trade commissioners in various countries of the world, more than 60 of whom are in countries other than the United States. Let me tell the House of the recent changes we have made. In eastern Europe we have increased our representation; we have posted a resident trade commissioner to Warsaw and assigned an additional officer to Moscow and one to Belgrade. We have arranged our first government-sponsored participation in a trade fair in Moscow and have mounted two trade shows in Budapest.

As far as western Europe is concerned, we have stepped up our activities, including the reaching of a science and technology agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany. On the continent of Africa we have opened a new office in Abidjan, reopened our Cairo office and are presently opening a new office in Algiers. We have also been doing things in the Far East. For example, we have opened a new office in Djakarta. We have opened a new office in China, of course, following our mission there.

We are doing things in Latin America too. Hon. members may be tired of hearing about our trade expansion activities, but I merely wish to point out that the suggestion that Canada has been concentrating its efforts in this regard upon the United States is entirely false. We have been expanding our trade promotion all around the world and our efforts are showing tremendous results.

Since my time is nearly up I will deal with but one other matter, the \$80 million. Hon. members on the other

[Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary).]