

Canada Development Corporation

cedural aspects. But in our view there is another course which might be taken. That would be for the government to withdraw this private corporation legislation and bring in a Canada development corporation bill which would really be public and which would really protect the public interest instead of the kind of legislation which is now before us.

So I have made two proposals. One is for Your Honour to decide and the other is for the government. I guess I have more faith in Your Honour than I have in the government. At any rate these are the courses which we believe to be open. One is for the government to withdraw this bill and bring in a proper one which would really protect the public interest. But if the government declines to do so, then I urge Your Honour to recognize the force of the argument we have advanced thus far in the debate on procedure and agree that the bill before us is a bill which is more private than public and that it should therefore receive the special treatment set out in the case of private bills. This would involve, first of all, a reference to the examiners of petitions for private bills. If they were to decide that this was a hybrid bill, it would then be referred to the Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders. The next stage would depend upon what that committee reported. At any rate I do not think it is proper for the House to continue to discuss the order before us at all until this issue has been resolved, and I hope Your Honour will so rule.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, we have just heard two masterly speeches on procedure and not being an expert in this field, I do not intend to try to influence your decision on the way Bill C-219 should be considered. Besides, I believe we will hear at least one more expert. For this reason, I shall not be long because I merely want to say that in my opinion the bill shows a strong socialist tendency.

No matter how the legislation is introduced, whether it is called a public bill, a private bill or a hybrid bill, the government will do all it can to have it adopted. As far as I am concerned, and I think it is the feeling of all my colleagues of the Ralliement créditiste, I shall rely entirely on your decision.

No matter how this bill is introduced, we shall object to it, because its purpose is to create a corporation to maintain Canadian ownership of our industries. We are convinced that there are other ways to protect our Canadian companies and to guide production in Canada.

This, I think, is not the role of the government. This is why we shall object to this bill, no matter how it is introduced.

[English]

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to deal with one particular aspect of the argument which should be placed before Your Honour in connection with the presentation of this bill. It is not my intention to comment, except incidentally, on the contents of the measure; I am concerned rather with the method used in presenting this legislation.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

As Your Honour is aware, I have on previous occasions objected to the manner in which legislation has been brought forward—the nature of the recommendations, for example. These are matters which need to be watched carefully because it is not beyond the capacity of the government to err with respect to them. I would suggest to Your Honour respectfully that the government has erred this afternoon, as it did the other day, in presenting this bill in such a manner. Not only the government, but the House itself, is faced with a problem. Some people may say, "All right, let us get on; the objectives here are good." I put it to Your Honour that the ends do not justify the means, and if there is a way of doing things correctly, they ought to be done correctly.

● (3:50 p.m.)

As was properly pointed out by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) and, I believe, by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), we are now charting a course on previously uncharted seas. It is conceivable that in the years to come legislation of a general pattern similar to this will be brought forward by whatever administration has power then, and it would be extremely wrong if we were to chart the course in a wrong direction. I, therefore, wish to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that this bill, in its composition, is very definitely a hybrid bill. Although our rules make no provision directly for dealing with hybrid bills, we still, under our Standing Order, have clause 1. That is in force just as is any other rule and, therefore, I would suggest to Your Honour the way that this perhaps should be considered.

Since the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has referred to some of the detail I wished to refer to Your Honour, I hope to be able to shorten my argument and not repeat what the hon. member said. There is no doubt that Bill C-219 has the criteria of a public bill. Part II of the bill is entitled, "Federal Government Participation". If we refer to clauses 35, 37, 39 and 40 we shall see that each of them entitles the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) to do certain things; they empower the minister to lend public moneys to the corporation. Clause 39 provides that certain public companies that own public property may be sold by the government to that particular corporation. Another clause provides that the government may appoint a number of directors instead of exercising share voting rights. Clause 42 provides that the Minister of Finance may use public money from the consolidated revenue fund to buy shares of or make loans to the company. I would say that this is a sufficient indication of the public interest in the bill and the consequent measure of public policy involved.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the bill was introduced by a minister. It did not come in by way of a petition, and therefore it has that aspect of a public bill. There was a recommendation; but that, too, is one of the attributes of a public bill. I put it to Your Honour that the entire bill, other than two very temporary and transitory features affecting the government, is of a private nature. Part I of the bill is strictly a corporate incorporation bill, and the