

These amendments form step one in the process of considering and possibly stopping that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to speak to Motion No. 19 as proposed by my colleague from Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) and try and convince Hon. Members that the amendment in question is indeed an important one.

What the motion means is that the Minister is being asked to do two things. First of all, he is being asked to carefully consider foreign take-overs, making sure he has done everything in his power to encourage other Canadian companies to take an interest in a company that may be purchased by foreign interests. Second, the Minister is being asked to exercise the powers he has to inform his Cabinet colleagues about what is going on in his department and, conversely, to receive from those same Cabinet colleagues the information he needs to ensure that everything is proceeding in an orderly fashion, that everything is co-ordinated, and that all parties are working together to create jobs and attract investment for the benefit of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to get back to the amendment in question, and without quoting extensively from what was said in committee and in various public forums where people have asked that the Minister be given such authority, I simply want to comment on a recommendation by the President of the Science Council, Dr. Stuart Smith, because he appeared before the committee and asked the Government to carefully examine the following suggestion, namely that... As the House is aware, there is a \$5 million threshold, which means that the Government must carefully examine any foreign take-over of Canadian assets worth more than \$5 million. On the other hand, there are of course companies, and I know several... I see my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté), I see my colleagues from the Ottawa-Carleton area... there are many communities in Canada where industries with assets worth less than \$5 million and provide employment might be the subject of a foreign take-over or might be of particular interest to a foreign company, and this might be a lumber mill or a sawmill or a paper mill, whatever, a local industry, and of course I am not talking about a shoe store, for instance, that might be bought out... That is not what I mean. I am referring to established industries that are important to the community where they are located.

Mr. Speaker, every year, the Government gives grants to companies and industries in the private sector. Sometimes there are very good reasons for helping a company. For instance, a company may be given a grant of \$100,000.

When Mr. Smith proposed the amendment before the committee, he said: Any company which receives \$100,000 in five years or over five years should be the subject of close scrutiny by the Minister to make sure that the company was not sold to

foreign interests at a profit, thus taking advantage of the \$100,000 grant.

I think it is serious, I think it is necessary, and I think coordination is required at the departmental level to be sure that grants to companies benefit Canadian companies and, therefore, Canadian workers. That is why, first, I urge the Minister to find out whether there might be a Canadian company interested in buying the company and continue to create jobs and operate the factory, the plant or the sawmill. Second, I think it is important that the Minister should know how much the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Siddon), for instance, contributes to development or research. I think he has to know what the Minister of Public Works (Mr. La Salle) may have given in grants to such or such company, or such or such organization, just so he might be able to say: My colleagues and I will coordinate the whole thing, see to it that everybody knows what the left and right hands are doing so that, one way or another, Canadians will become interested in the economic activity of their country.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the motion under consideration has a dual purpose: first, to secure notifications and conduct reviews of investments by non-Canadians and, second, to provide to other relevant federal departments and agencies information about means to stimulate investment by Canadians in Canada.

● (1210)

[*English*]

In particular, Mr. Speaker, we feel it is very important that these reviews be conducted on all proposed foreign investments, especially those which deal with the high tech industry and research and development and those that have received grants of \$100,000 or more in encouragement from the federal Government so that they can continue operating in our country.

Everyone knows that Ottawa-Carleton has a very active high tech industry. That high tech industry has been the object of federal and provincial grants. That industry has received these grants to encourage it to establish itself and to create jobs in the Ottawa area. Recently, the Chairman of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton wrote to the Premier of this province asking him to put more money into the Ottawa-Carleton area so that its high tech industry can really grow and prosper. The Minister responsible for this legislation before the House could, in my opinion, co-ordinate not only with his colleagues in Cabinet but with the provincial Government, and possibly with the municipal Governments so that, indeed, we could look at a program of encouragement, co-ordination and working together to encourage these industries to grow.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read into the record the statements made by Mr. Haydon in his letter to the Provincial