

Energy, Mines and Resources

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Chair is aware that the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) will seek the unanimous consent of the House to put an amendment. The way that the amendments are now ordered provides that the amendment put forth by the hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Beatty) will be first put to the House and then a government amendment put forth by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde). The only suggestion I can make is that while the amendment by the hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe is under debate, the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway might want to arrange the matter as to the order of debate on these motions.

Mr. Harvie Andre (for Mr. Beatty) moved:

That Bill C-102, an act to amend the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources Act be amended in Clause 1

(A) By adding immediately after line 3 at page 3 the following:

"7. No corporation incorporated under subsection 6(1) or this section, or of which any shares have been acquired by the Minister thereunder, shall, without the approval of the Governor in Council,

(a) procure the incorporation of a corporation or

(b) acquire shares of a corporation which by virtue of such acquisition would become a subsidiary, within the meaning of the Canada Business Corporations Act, of the corporation.

(B) By striking out lines 4 and 5 at page 3 and substituting the following therefor:

8. (1) An order of the Governor in Council under subsection 6(1) or section 7 shall be laid".

He said: Mr. Speaker, the intent of this amendment is to provide for the incorporation of subsidiary corporations the same kind of check, minor though it is, that exists in regard to incorporating a new Crown corporation. That is, Mr. Speaker, the gist of this bill when it is fully amended is that the minister, if he wishes to set up a new Crown corporation, must first table a statement in the House of Commons indicating the reasons for the formation of the Crown corporation. There is the ability through a negative resolution, or a positive resolution if introduced by the government, or there will after this amendment is passed, for the House to cause a debate to be held, a three-hour debate with a vote at the end, either concurring or not concurring in the establishment of this Crown corporation.

However, Mr. Speaker, because of the ability of a corporation then to incorporate a subsidiary corporation, we do—without the benefit of this amendment—have the possibility that a Crown corporation could be set up. Whatever minor checks the system provides now in terms of a negative resolution and a statement from the minister, and so on, would be there, but that Crown corporation could set up unlimited subsidiary corporations. Those subsidiary corporations could be established without the knowledge of Parliament, without any indication to Parliament as to the reason for their establishment. Those subsidiary corporations could have the full range of powers of the main Crown corporation. They could undertake debt obligations on behalf of the Crown. They could undertake all manner of activities that could serve as a pork barrel and could serve any number of purposes without there

being any way in which this House could even know what they are doing, let alone hold them accountable.

So I would ask government members and the New Democratic Party members to give serious consideration to this motion. It is not going to hamstring the government in any way, shape or form. It simply provides that if we are setting up Crown corporations, whether directly or by way of subsidiary, we at least have the same kind of check, minor though it is, for both types of Crown corporation. This amendment would guarantee that, Mr. Speaker, and in no way, shape or form restrict the government from pursuing the fundamental intent of Bill C-102, offensive as it is to us in a general sense.

We nonetheless would request of the government that if they choose, and they obviously do, to proceed with Bill C-102 and this ability to create Crown corporations, then at least let us acknowledge that in order to be truly honest about the amount of accountability and openness we will have, we must also include subsidiary corporations. This amendment would take care of that problem.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): In my opinion the nays have it. Pursuant to section (11) of Standing Order 75, a recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred.

● (1750)

I have before me a motion standing in the name of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde), but the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) on a point of order if he wishes to seek the unanimous consent of the House to put his own motion first.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I seek that consent. I think it would be easier to deal with our motion briefly at this point since it does refer to the bill as printed now, and I believe there is agreement. I will just put the motion and ask the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Kristiansen) to speak briefly. I move: