

pay. That is not true unless, of course, the company concerned did not live up to the obligations when the agreement was made between it and the board. If they did not maintain the employment they said they would, the grant could of course be withheld. In all cases a firm would know at the beginning of the period that it was going to get a grant if it lived up to the agreement with the board.

The Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the New Democratic Party drew attention to the words "likely" and "significantly" in clause 11. I refer to clause 11 which provides:

● (9:20 p.m.)

Upon application therefor to the Board by a manufacturer who establishes that the work force at his plant is or is likely to be significantly reduced through lay-offs—

We do not propose that assistance should be provided only when lay-offs have actually occurred. The idea is to provide assistance so that lay-offs can be prevented. This is the reason for including the word "likely". The use of the word "significant" can easily be explained. Since the bill is designed to maintain employment, the size of the unemployment factor is important; the legislation is not designed to look after day to day problems which can be taken care of in the ordinary marketplace, the kind of thing which goes on every day in business.

I know the leader of the New Democratic Party, the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) sees many demons under his bed. Especially does he see American demons under his bed. He is most concerned about multinational corporations, United States corporations which might possibly get some benefit from this legislation. But I want to tell the New Democratic Party and its leader that this bill is designed to aid the employment position of Canadian workers whether they are employed by a Canadian company or a foreign company. It is the employment which is important. If they work for a company in Canada which might lay them off, the bill is designed to assist them in maintaining their employment. I make no apologies for this. It is the Canadian workers we are concerned about.

The leader of the New Democratic Party is also concerned lest some of this money go to preserve the profits of the corporations concerned. Well, that is not the purpose of the bill. The main purpose, as I have said, is to maintain employment. But profit levels in Canadian industry have been very low during the past few years. The hon. member knows this and other members of the House know it too. I think the hon. member realizes, also, that there is a direct relationship between the profits of corporations and the number of people they employ and the kind of expansion programs they undertake. We as a government make no apology for being concerned about the profits of the corporations in Canada. When corporations are healthy they are in an expansive mood and in a mood to employ more Canadians.

Several hon. members referred to clause 15 of the bill. Not least among them was the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan). I have the impression that he did not read the wording of the clause when he expressed

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the view that too much leeway was allowed to the government in reaching decisions, and intimated that the system was open to abuse. For the benefit of the hon. member and for the information of other hon. members opposite I draw attention to the following words in clause 15:

Where a manufacturer who makes an application under this act for a grant is unable to comply with any regulations applicable in his case and the board is of the opinion that a grant to the manufacturer would not be outside the purposes of this act, as described in section 3, the board may, having regard to the purposes of this act, recommend to the Governor in Council that a grant be authorized.

Companies cannot go to the government and get special consideration under the terms of this clause. They have to apply to the board. The board is composed of seven Canadian citizens who are specially chosen for their impartiality. The reason for the wording of the clause is simple: there may be situations in which a corporation cannot fulfil the strict requirements of the regulations. It might, for example, not have been in business during the base period. Yet it could be an exporting company in danger of having to lay off employees. As the bill is now drafted, such a company can go to the board and ask for a recommendation to the Governor in Council that a grant be made. Other cases of hardship can be dealt with in the same way. I am surprised hon. members opposite should have been so worried about this. If they had read the clause carefully I am sure they would have been satisfied there is no opportunity for abuse.

Other points of interest were raised during the course of the debate, including some valuable suggestions which will be very carefully considered. I wish now to refer to a point raised by the hon. member for York South. He said that firms which receive grants under the program might sell their goods in the Canadian market at depressed prices, causing lay-offs in competing firms which were domestically oriented and unable to receive assistance under the program. With respect to production being dumped on the Canadian market, this is one possible effect of the United States surcharge which we are trying to counter. We are seeking to prevent companies from choosing the Canadian market as their alternative by trying to make it possible for them to continue to export, precisely in order to prevent what the hon. member is so worried about.

I wish to say a few words about agriculture. The bill before the House is designed specifically to deal with manufacturing industries. It is presented by the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) gave a full explanation in the House yesterday of the programs which his department has designed to mitigate the effect of difficulties which may occur in the field of agriculture. I shall not attempt to repeat what he said because he gave an extremely lucid and detailed explanation of these measures. I am sure that if hon. members have specific problems in their own ridings concerning agricultural industries, they will get a fair hearing from the Minister of Agriculture followed by the action needed to solve those problems.