

Supply

was no longer a matter of speculation that, indeed, the Americans at the very highest level, the President of the United States, had brought the matter forward.

Mrs. Maily: Not on the table.

Mr. Axworthy: The Hon. Member says, "not on the table". I do not know where the President put it. Perhaps he put it on the Prime Minister head. I do not know how he handed it to him. Perhaps they were sitting on the floor. Maybe that is where it was put. The fact is that Mr. Reisman said without contradiction from anyone opposite that this matter was brought forward by cabinet level Ministers of the U.S. government and by the President of the United States. They have put the matter directly—perhaps not on the table—right on the plate of the Prime Minister. What we wanted to know is did the Prime Minister say, "No, we can't do it. We will not broaden and give you national treatment in investment"?

All the Prime Minister had to do last Tuesday when we asked was to give us a simple answer that, "Yes, the Americans brought that to my attention and I said no". But the Government has never said that. It has danced, jumped, twisted, turned, but has never been prepared to say that when the President asked it did not have the guts to say no.

We know why it did not have the guts because it is going to give away that kind of open access in investment so it can get a deal, so the Prime Minister can save his political skin, he thinks. The Canadian people will not buy it. They will not buy anything this Prime Minister says. That is why that Party is standing at 25 per cent in the polls.

Mr. McDermid: There, you changed it again.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have two more questioners. I would hope that the Parliamentary Secretary would restrain himself. I would like to recognize the Hon. Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco) and then the Hon. Member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso (Mr. O'Neil).

Mr. Brisco: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Liberal spokesman on this subject today, FIRA and Investment Canada, was not at the Standing Committee on DRIE yesterday. We had a witness from the City of Brantford, an economic development officer, speaking on concerns relating to DRIE and foreign investment. His comments were, and they are a matter of record, that nothing was ever accomplished in terms of foreign investment for that community under FIRA. All they were aware of was delay after delay, frustration after frustration. Indeed, he complimented the Government of Canada for its change of position and legislation so we could have Investment Canada.

I would like to move quickly to my own constituency and give the Hon. Member two examples. Westar Pulp Mill is a Canadian owned company in British Columbia. It is B.C. resources owned. It was sold to Bathurst-Consolidated and the Investment Bank of China.

• (1450)

What happened? One of the first initiatives was to seek a small amount of federal assistance to develop a new system of feeding the boiler in that huge pulp mill, so that the end result would be a dramatic reduction in pollution going into the air, leading to acid rain, and pollution going into the water, and the smell. Not only that, the technology that would ensue has world-wide application in 400 different mills, all originating from that investment in technology and science and development at that mill, partially foreign-owned.

Finally we turn to Cominco Ltd., one of the world leaders in the technology of gallium arsenide, of zinc production a potential world leader in lead production. Who do we find marketing that technology? The ownership, as sold off by the CPR, is Teck Corporation, which holds 50 per cent of CPR's shares, Metallgesellschaft of Germany, 25 per cent, and M.I.M. Holdings Limited of Australia, 25 per cent. All three companies are good corporate citizens, putting a totally different complexion on the obtuse statements of the spokesman for the Liberal Party in today's debate.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco). I am surprised he did not bring up the issue of Kootenay Power and Light Company—

Mr. Brisco: I would be delighted to.

Mr. Axworthy:—which represents, Mr. Speaker, the first time in the history of this country that we are allowing a major public power utility to be taken over by foreign interests.

Mr. Brisco: No, it is not.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, 7,000 people signed a petition against that takeover. Investment Canada, this wonderful agency that the Tories put in place, on December 21 last, in the dark of the night, passed on that application, without even considering the evidence from—

An Hon. Member: They have never been known to meet late at night.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to provide proper information to the Tory MPs. Thank God they can get good information from somewhere. They obviously do not get it from their own sources.

The fact of the matter is, Investment Canada passed on the Kootenay Power and Light application without even bothering to take into consideration the evidence adduced at the hearings of the Public Utilities Commission of B.C. They simply said: "Go ahead, take it over." In that part of B.C. alone, 7,000 people signed a petition to stop the total give-away of a major public utility in Canada.

It seems to me that the Hon. Member opposite should be a lot more concerned about the anger and the indignation of the