

*Export Development Act***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

EXPORT DEVELOPMENT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-110, to amend the Export Development Act, as recorded (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs; and Motions Nos. 3 and 5 (Mr. Blenkarn).

Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I am happy again to participate in this debate on yet another amendment to the legislation regarding the Canadian Export Development Corporation.

I want to say at the beginning that I and my colleagues in the NDP, generally speaking, support the thrust of the Conservative amendments to this Bill, including this one, not because we accept the simple argument, and what some of us would think is the simple-minded argument of some, that any expanded public role or state intervention is wrong per se, because it is not. Rather, we support the thrust of the amendments before us because we believe in the safeguarding and creative processes of governmental and public accountability.

To those Members of the Conservative Party who share this rationale, and I know there are many of them, I say we agree with you. But to those other Conservatives, particularly B.C. Conservatives, such as the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington), the Hon. Member for Prince George-Bulkley Valley (Mr. McCuish) and the Hon. Member for North Vancouver-Burnaby (Mr. Cook) and, in fact, most B.C. Tories who are the blood brothers, bed partners and policy partners of the Conservative Government of British Columbia, the Social Credit Government of British Columbia—I must say that I cannot and will not agree with their demonstrated purpose which is to centralize public authority and to destroy even the existing mechanisms of public accountability of Crown corporations and public policy.

The B.C. Social Credit Government, the B.C. Conservative Government and all the P.C. Members I have mentioned, who have on a number of occasions gone public making it clear they are all one and they essentially believe in the same things, are part and parcel of a government policy in Victoria which has disbanded the legislative committee on Crown corporations. Meanwhile, some of the federal Tories have the unmitigated gall to say in this House that they want desperately to see the same kind of committee in order to bring our federal Crown corporations under control.

They cannot have it both ways. They and their friends in British Columbia have disbanded the legislative committee on Crown corporations, thus destroying the very kind of agency which their colleagues in the federal Parliament have advocated.

Do they speak with a forked tongue, Mr. Speaker, or are they simply confused? I prefer to believe that, because they are honourable men and women, the latter is the case. But

Canada at this time of economic difficulty and challenge cannot afford such gross confusion that says “nonaccountable state intervention and irresponsible heavy borrowing by Crown corporations and Government agencies is okay as long as it is us Tories and Socreds that do it, but it is the devil’s work and the road to ruin if done by anybody else.” They cannot have it both ways. We can look at the record in British Columbia to see what these people do when they have the power of government. That Government, essentially a Conservative Government, has gone from \$4 billion to \$14 billion or \$15 billion in Crown corporation and agency debt in less than eight years. There has been an increase in that Government’s Crown corporation debt by over 350 per cent in less than eight years. That is what a Conservative Government has done in the Province of British Columbia. Often this is based on totally false projections of market growth and revenue potential despite some very informed warnings to the contrary. Conservative words and actions just do not jibe. They talk one line and they follow another. They are not bad guys, just confused.

● (1620)

Saul Alinsky once said that the secret of successful social action is to get people to do the right things for the wrong reasons. In the case of this Progressive Conservative amendment, the Official Opposition is advocating doing the right thing for the wrong reason. But because we would never question its motives in the House, we will likely support most and possibly all the amendments in order that we may do the right thing for the right reason—to provide greater parliamentary control and public accountability, and not simply because of blind dogma.

The “tinker toy” approach of the Liberals to government must be stopped. Growth for the sake of growth is just plain dumb. I fully agree with my Conservative friend who decried the number of bureaucratic academics in Government. To that I would add the excessive number of lawyers and others, whom I would call woolly-headed idealists abounding in the circles of Government and many other institutions across the country. By “idealists”, I am referring to those lawyers and academics who fall into the trap of thinking that simply because a law is passed something has actually been changed. Anyone with experience in the real world knows that that just ain’t so. Unless we have the will to perform a function, unless we have enforcement mechanisms, unless we have our roots down deep in the marketplace and in the realities of the world, nothing happens simply because a few words in the law have been changed. It just does not work that way.

There has been some talk and debate, going slightly beyond the amendment generally addressing some of our export and development strategies for trade. One example of export and industrial strategy has to be the joint decision of the Government opposite and the Conservative Opposition to launch the pre-build pipeline, an issue they would like to forget. That was part of an export strategy. They have fallen flat on their faces with that, as they have fallen flat on their faces with Northeast Coal in British Columbia, a combination of provincial Government and federal Government bungling. They gave the United