

Supply—Defence Production

business from one day to the next, at no cost. That cannot be done. Anybody who is honest in business will see that his clients and his employees do not suffer financially, if he can avoid it, when he goes out of business, unless he chooses to go into bankruptcy. Surely the hon. gentleman does not suggest that the crown should pretend or allege bankruptcy to avoid its obligations. We have tried to honour our obligations.

An endeavour was made to interest a number of companies in this operation, including the Canadian Bronze Company; the Heroux Machine Parts Company; United Aircraft of Canada; North American Trust; Canadian Management Company; Bendix Corporation, U.S.A.; Aluminum Company, Canada; Litton Systems, Toronto; Central Dynamics Limited, Montreal; Russel Industries; Motor Specialty Manufacturing, Vancouver; Levy Industries, Toronto, and I could go on and on with the list. When the hon. gentleman rather glibly suggests it could have been taken over by him for \$1 and he could have doubled his money I should like to say to him that if he had assumed the contracts that Bartaco assumed I would have been glad to pay him \$100. Bartaco has assumed a lot of continuing contractual undertakings which represent crown liabilities. In order to get the company to do this, we had to agree to absorb incurred losses carried forward from the balance sheets of previous years, plus the discharge of a number of outstanding financial obligations against the company. We were unable to get a continuing operator on any other condition.

One could have closed this down and rendered the facility saleable for scrap. In that particular area real estate is not very high. The building is obviously some 15 or 16 years old and unfortunately the machinery is equally as old. Something might have been received from the sale of this facility for scrap. The 165 or more employees would have been thrown out of work and the crown would have had to assume the responsibility for paying not only their separation pay but also an amount in respect of cancellation charges on contracts for process at the mill.

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the minister does not have to lecture me about how to run a business. I run a successful business, which is more than he has ever done, and I can prove that by asking the Minister of National Revenue whether I run a successful business. Let me say again to the minister that if I had the opportunity to buy that particular plant and property for \$1 I could at least double

[Mr. Drury.]

my money. I could run any business if the minister on behalf of the Canadian people would agree to pay any liabilities I incurred. That is what he is telling me, and it is foolish. I don't think the minister had the authority to commit the Canadian people to any liabilities incurred by a private company, and I think this matter should be sent to a committee for investigation. There is more to it than what has come out tonight.

Mr. Walker: How about Dosco steel in Cape Breton?

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Chairman, I rise on a question of privilege. The former whip of the Liberal party has just made a disparaging remark about the steelworkers in Cape Breton. They are not associated in any way with this particular debate, and I intend to make this very clear. This is the general attitude displayed by the former whip and other members of his party, although he is around here so seldom one would hardly know that. Let me add that this is the government's current approach in respect of the Sydney situation, in spite of what the Minister of National Health and Welfare has said in Cape Breton about how desperately this government is searching for a way to help.

● (9:50 p.m.)

This is the situation, despite the fact that the Prime Minister last night on national television said that when it comes to spending money to keep people employed, he is only too happy to do it. In spite of that, this callous government denies to the people of Nova Scotia the opportunity to obtain work. Yet the Minister of National Health and Welfare last summer in Cape Breton promised an audience of 20,000 people that this problem would be solved. Despite all this we have the hon. member rising and making the degrading remark that he did.

Mr. Walker: Mr. Chairman, the remark I made was addressed to the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek. The hon. member for Cape Breton South has referred to the remark I made. That remark was addressed to the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek. I was just trying to keep the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek logical in the argument he was putting forward.

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I think I have been quite logical. With regard to the people who would have been laid off if this plant had been closed, I can understand it is