

authorized capital; that means that the Export Development Corporation can borrow up to \$20 billion instead of \$10 billion. It will double the authorized capital; that means that the Export Development Corporation can insure up to another \$20 billion instead of \$10 billion. The Government can make loans, not of a proper commercial nature, to a limit of \$10 billion instead of the present \$2.5 billion. The Government may now make insurance commitments, not of a proper commercial nature, to a ceiling of \$10 billion if the Bill is passed, instead of the present \$3.5 billion.

Mr. Regan: It makes jobs.

Mr. Lawrence: The Minister interrupts to say that this makes jobs. It may well make jobs although I do not think it has made many jobs up to now. But surely, if that is the point the Minister wants to get across to the Canadian public and the House of Commons, what better attitude could he or should he take than to say, "We will make a complete revelation; we will make a commitment now that these matters have to be authorized by Parliament and the House of Commons." The question is not whether the Export Development Corporation is going to make jobs with this extra money; the question is whether the people's representatives have the right to decide whether it is going to have the money to make the jobs. That is the point.

According to one authority "the Export Development Corporation is rapidly becoming a bureaucratic monster, borrowing and lending money, making unsound loans to foreign countries, extending its empire and involving Canada in transactions and negotiations that are both costly and inefficient". That is not rhetoric from a politician; that is no argument even from a Conservative politician in this House; Those are the words of an academic expert who has studied the Export Development Corporation. That is the warning from Professor André Raynauld of the University of Montreal, and it is pretty strong language.

The point is that that empire building, that involvement of Canada in transactions and negotiations that are both costly and inefficient, can be done with no further authorization, approval or even debate in the Parliament of Canada. I say to the Minister, fie on you! Shame on you! That should not happen.

Seven years ago an Auditor General noted that in the majority of Crown corporations audited by him, "financial management and control was weak and ineffective. Moreover, co-ordination and guidance by central Government agencies on financial management and control practices in these Crown corporations, is virtually nonexistent".

The Minister perseveres in this arrogant and unfortunate attitude. I appeal to him now to make the necessary changes in the Act or to agree to the Conservative Opposition amendments which would make the Export Development Corporation accountable to Parliament.

Mr. John Gamble (York North): Mr. Speaker, according to the Minister responsible for Bill C-110, it deals with the

Export Development Act

creation of employment. Since everyone wants desperately to create in Canada additional jobs of a permanent nature, this Bill therefore allegedly becomes sacrosanct. This Bill, of course, deals with the export of products from Canada, and since everyone is clearly desirous of endorsing, improving and extending the exports from this nation, everyone should clearly favour this Bill. So the story goes. This Bill, Mr. Speaker, symbolizes, probably more so than anything we have seen recently, an attack upon the principles of Parliament. The roots of this place lie in the fact that we here demand that the Government account for what it does and that we control the purse strings. Without that financial control, this place would not exist. If it did not exist, democracy would not exist in Canada. It is because this piece of proposed legislation, by way of amendment to the Export Development Act, attacks those basic principles, that I am opposed to the Bill itself.

● (1540)

We have heard from some of my colleagues who have detailed the problems which the Bill presents in terms of quantum, in terms of money. So often in this place we become accustomed to hearing about very substantial sums of money. Even the authorized capital in itself, as altered by this Bill, should be enough to make the ordinary Hon. Member of Parliament—certainly, the ordinary citizen—sit up and take notice, since we are talking about two thousand million dollars. We have shortened this figure to \$2 billion. If we use the expression "trillion", we could probably deal with but fractions rather than full dollar amounts. However, in essence we are talking about an authorized capital of two thousand million dollars, to promote, we are told most assiduously and diligently, the export of Canadian products.

The \$2 billion is not, however, the end. The corporation itself, made up of and controlled by public servants, may borrow ten times the \$2 billion, or twenty thousand million dollars. The corporation may, in addition, guarantee and insure for an additional twenty thousand million dollars and, under circumstances where even the public servants determine that it would be inappropriate for this corporation to guarantee or to provide insurance, the Government may, by Order in Council, direct that that guarantee and that insurance be provided to the extent of \$10 billion, or ten thousand million dollars. That is the difficulty, Mr. Speaker. We are now talking about gigantic amounts of money which are beyond the control of this House.

I can recall so vividly questions being asked and answers being given with respect to the Farm Credit Corporation here in this place, where \$300 million is considered to be a very substantial injection into the backbone of this nation, into its agricultural area, the farming community. All Hon. Members and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) deal with that rather large amount of money with great care and attention. It is, after all, to be used by the farming community. Yet when we deal with exports, we are dealing with \$52 billion, and we do so with the greatest of ease, without concern. Somehow our regard for values has been damaged and shifted by an immunity which we have developed to the value of money. We come to