

It has been a partner with Canadian exporters since World War II, helping them compete more effectively in foreign markets by reducing the financial risks and other difficulties involved in penetrating these markets. For those members who are not familiar with the work of EDC, let me take a few minutes to explain the nature of the corporation.

It is EDC's job performed on behalf of all Canadians to act as a catalyst in stimulating Canadian exports which in turn stimulate the Canadian economy. It encourages exports by reducing the risks involved in operating outside our borders. EDC facilitates export trade and investment through the provision of risk management services, including insurance and financing to Canadian companies as well as their customers abroad.

The corporation has supported approximately \$60 billion worth of Canadian exports over the past decade. That amounts to over two million person-years of employment. It has been an essential factor in facilitating export trade. Demand for its services has tripled in the last eight years.

In 1992 alone, it provided services to nearly 2,000 clients, 80 per cent of which were small and medium-sized companies. That involved them in export transactions worth more than \$8 billion. EDC has operated on commercial principles since it was established in 1969. Its customers pay for the services that it provides. The Canadian taxpayer does not.

Whatever borrowing the corporation does, it is balanced by increasing its assets. It has a long-standing record of self-sufficiency.

[*Translation*]

This is the type of self-sustaining discipline that makes EDC so valuable. Canadians want governments to do everything possible to stimulate employment, but they also realize the urgency for these same governments to reduce their deficits. Strengthening EDC represents one way this Parliament can stimulate job creation without increasing the burden on Canadians.

[*English*]

As we approach the end of the 20th century, EDC's services have developed gaps. There are three good

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explanations for it and they all begin with the letter *c*. EDC's customers are demanding more. The corporation's competitors in other nations have been offering more support to their exporters. The degree of international competitiveness has escalated considerably.

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As effective a catalyst as EDC has been for Canadian exports, it has been the need for the kind of boost that we have given to many of Canada's other economic levers as part of our competitive repositioning. The time has now come to free EDC from the legislative strait-jacket that in these new market conditions has begun to restrict its capability to respond to our exporters' needs.

[*Translation*]

We need to give EDC a new flexibility. In making EDC more flexible, we will make it more responsive to the needs of Canadian exporters, the people we are counting on to meet the tough challenges of international competition.

Canadian exporters have been making more sophisticated demands of EDC in recent years, as they themselves face more sophisticated demands.

Bill C-118 is designed to meet the demands of EDC's customers, to offer them services that are at least as helpful as those their competitors from other countries have access to, and to recognize that international competitiveness is one of the keys to Canada's and individual Canadians' prosperity.

[*English*]

Simply put, we need a more complete Export Development Corporation. These amendments are designed to give us one. The proposed new EDC can be best summed up in two words: creative packaging.

In the new international marketplace where buyers have to a large extent been able to ship the onus of financing to producers and whose projects are more often commercial ventures rather than government backed projects, financial packaging in some situations has begun to rank with price and quality in determining the product's marketability. Canadian exporters are asking for a more comprehensive mix of financial services from EDC.