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which provided for expansion of plants and development of new products.

The Government, in its November 8 statement, eliminated that form of support in Tier 1 areas, which include the Ottawa Valley. Those are the problems we are facing. I want to make sure that the record is not simply interpreted through the mind of the President who obviously has his own reasons for wanting the British Telecom application to go ahead.

I think it is important to recognize that governments must play a role in this area but not necessarily one in which there is involvement in an automatic way. I remind my friends in the NDP that the role of the Government in this case is to be discretionary.

We believe that another major omission by the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion is his unwillingness to make any effort to seek out alternatives for the infusion of the necessary equity capital. He has taken a simple hands off approach, and I suggest the Government's version of free market is really an evasion of its responsibility to work with companies such as Mitel.

I find it very strange that the Minister spoke about Liberal protectionist measures. He is the very one who, in a *Financial Post* article, said that he would guarantee markets of 30 per cent to 40 per cent in markets such as textiles and shoes. I suggest that he must decide which way he will face in the morning, and what kind of Minister he will be, so that other Canadians will not be as confused as he seems to be.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, we must go by what we read. Of course, the quotation from Mr. Cowpland is:

We tried very hard a year ago to get government assistance of about \$30 million to \$40 million, and we couldn't get it. At that point in time, the company was nose down, and there was no relief from the government—not even a nickel. We had to scramble on our own.

This raises a general point. During my speech I talked about a national problem. I think Mitel and what is happening to that company is a symbol of that national problem. It is not a problem that was created in the last eight months, but a problem which we all recognize is the legacy of many changes in the world. It is not something that was created willfully by any government.

However, the legacy of our failure to respond effectively to the high tech challenge is a legacy from the previous Government, just as much as it is a problem for the existing Government. I believe that the previous Government had a system of grants and support which it hoped would provide support to important high tech initiatives. However, from looking at some of those initiatives, such as the Bell helicopter case, I know that incredible sums of money were spent with very little in the way of commitment and benefit for this country.

I believe that we need a strategy and approach which will learn from the failures of the past regime, build on those failures, and take some of those commitments from the Prime Ministers and others and put them into reality.

Mitel brings it all to a head. As I said at the beginning of my speech, Mitel becomes a symbol of our potential as well as a symbol of how urgent the issue is.

I simply want to conclude by saying that I can understand members opposite who talk about wanting to make Canada open for business. It is a perspective with which I disagree, but it is a philosophy that we can debate. There is a difference between "open for business" and "open for surrender". In the case of Mitel, we do not have to surrender that company. There is an alternative. There is the possibility of minority shareholding. There is a tremendous gain from that alternative. We do not have to go in the direction that we lost effective control of that crucial company in the future. I urge all my colleagues in the House to urge the Government to recognize that symbol of Mitel for the importance that it represents.

Mr. Dick: Mr. Speaker, there was an intervention by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) during the comment and question period. He showed his ignorance of the matter and showed that—

Mr. Rossi: A point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order. The question should be directed to the Member making the speech and not to comments or questions that were made during the debate. I would ask the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to follow accordingly.

Mr. Dick: I intend to put a question to the Hon. Member. I believe that during the comment portion I am not fettered by any rule of the House that I know of on the comments which I am allowed to make. That is what debate is all about. If I want to make a comment on some idiotic statement made by another Member I think I should be able to comment on that. There is no rule that says I cannot.

● (1240)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The period for questions and comments has now terminated. I would now recognize the Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria) for debate.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to congratulate you on your ruling as to the debate initiated by the last intervener.

I would like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) for the excellent motion he has brought to this House today.

Some-Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boudria: On behalf of Liberal caucus members I would like to congratulate the Member for the excellent fight he has led on behalf of our Party in this House. It is important to have people who can stand up for those things we believe in, not just those who roll around and play dead such as we see the Conservative book-ends and surfers doing occasionally.