

Export Development Act

I want to touch on another inconsistent matter in the government's policy. We were told by Mr. MacDonald, the president, in our committee hearings that the EDC will positively not have anything to do with Rhodesia. Rhodesia is not on the list. It does not matter what commercial sense it makes to finance a transaction with Rhodesia, Rhodesia is just not with us. I think it is still called Rhodesia and not Zimbabwe.

The corporation says the government has no power or authority regarding to whom they lend. However, if the government issues an official communication and passes an order in council that it has no relationship with Rhodesia, EDC will not finance a transaction with Rhodesia.

This was indeed welcome news, that if the government had passed an order in council or had a policy of not having anything to do with Rhodesia, EDC would not have anything to do with Rhodesia. One gained the impression from Mr. MacDonald that if the government passed an order in council that would be all that they needed to have something to do with them. However, he said it was their policy not to finance transactions with countries no longer *ad idem* with the Canadian public.

He was then asked about Cuba, whether EDC was still prepared to finance transactions with Cuba. We know that Cuba has a particularly soft spot in the heart of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). He is heart to heart with Fidel Castro. He has been beard to beard with him in the past.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: In fact, they liked each other so much at one time that, as our former Prime Minister, the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), said, he tried to canoe to Cuba from Florida, unsuccessfully. That would have been one of the great meetings of 1960 if we had been privileged to see that.

In any event, the Prime Minister has a very soft spot in his heart for him. We asked about Cuba because the Prime Minister has gotten a bit irascible about Cuba lately with all the bother in Africa, there being tens of thousands of Cubans in Africa. They are buzzing around like an African bee, stirring up trouble, stinging the economy and going into Mozambique, or whatever it is called these days. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, I am not the international affairs critic. It is hard to keep up with these names.

In any event, the Cubans are becoming a bit of a nuisance in Africa. The Prime Minister said in this House that we are not going to give Cuba anything else. He said they are not going to be on our gift list any longer. Therefore, we asked the president whether this would have any effect on EDC, whether EDC was still going to finance transactions with Cuba. We know that the minister of amateur sport and fitness, or amateur fitness and sport, or amateur fit sport or whatever it is, went to Cuba over Christmas.

Mr. Paproski: The minister in charge of gambling.

[Mr. Crosbie.]

Mr. Crosbie: The minister in charge of lottery and gambling went to Cuba over Christmas. Apparently we are still allowed to go there as tourists even though one minister is saying we should spend all our touring time in Canada. However, I do not want to get nasty and point at any inconsistencies about government action.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Hon. members opposite are very touchy. There must be an election coming in the next 12 months some time and they are getting very nervous. As I was saying, we asked whether EDC would still finance a transaction with Cuba. Lo and behold, Rhodesia is out and Cuba is in. If a commercial transaction comes along with Cuba, Cuba will be looked after. Therefore, Cuba is in and Rhodesia is out. They are on different continents; I suppose that accounts for the difference.

The hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) asked about Taiwan. Lo and behold, Taiwan is out and Cuba is in. The poor Taiwanese cannot get a bone or a sou. They cannot get a low interest loan from the EDC. It does not matter how good a piece of business it is for Canada, they cannot do any business with Taiwan. Nor can they do any business with Rhodesia. However, they can do it with Cuba, the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Poland and every other communist country in the world. They can do it with the high countries, the low countries, the mighty countries, but they cannot do it with Taiwan and Rhodesia.

The policy of this government is supposed to be all business. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce is all business. He does not want to have anything to do with outlawing and making illegal boycotts in the Arab-Israeli situation. He does not want to spoil Canadian trade and commerce with the Middle East and Arab countries. Therefore, he does not want to make the Arab-Israeli boycott illegal. He wants to allow Canadians to boycott Israel if they do not have to come to the government for assistance to do it. He will not assist them in doing it, but if they want to do it on their own, it is perfectly all right. However, it apparently is not all right for the EDC to do business with Rhodesia and Taiwan.

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We can't make cheese of one and chalk of the other. Has the country got a policy or hasn't it? Does it do business with the devil or anyone else who wants to do business with it, or does it not? In the committee, the minister said that we would do business with the devil if it was in the interests of Canada to do business with the devil. But apparently the Rhodesian devils and the Taiwanese devils are not in the same class as the Cuban devils. So we have discrimination now among devils and I intend to ask the Human Rights Commissioner, Mr. Gordon Fairweather, to examine this policy; it doesn't make much sense to me.

Either a country is going to base its foreign policy on human rights or some kind of moral consideration which we are told by the practised diplomats is not the right thing to do—it is apparently tricky and dangerous to make moral judgments on