

Financial Administration Act

because they have succeeded. They are advancing the frontiers of Canadian industry. They are doing the job for which they have been created.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Abbott: Some outrageous suggestions were put forward by the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez). Surprisingly, his views were subscribed to by the Leader of the Opposition who, one would have thought, should know better.

When the International Nickel Company determined to set up in Indonesia, this was a \$900 million deal. Their intentions were to buy in Canada about \$1 million worth of machinery and parts, if they could. It was only when the Export Development Corporation and other agencies of the Canadian government pressed them that that total was raised to some \$60 million. It was financed through EDC.

It was not that Indonesia was unable to set up its mine. It certainly was not going to wait for the Parliament of Canada to give it permission to set up this new mining enterprise. Thanks to the efforts of the EDC, a whole lot of Canadian jobs and manufacturing were created and maintained.

One of the sad aspects in Canada today is that we have a Leader of the Opposition who, on the verge of an election, is not content to puff himself up and say what he will do about sunset laws and other dreams he might have. He chooses to advance his cause by denigrating a vital economic enterprise that is very important to Canada, such as the Export Development Corporation. Some of the members of his caucus have expressed sounder views. The hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) made a rather reasonable speech the other day. The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Clarke) gave us some good comments as well. I hope these gentlemen will ask the Leader of the Opposition to concentrate on those matters he presumably knows something about, and allow them to go to the committee and bring forward important points they may have before this legislation is returned, giving parliament the opportunity to let the EDC get on with its job.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

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FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT**AMENDMENT TO ESTABLISH OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL**

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-10, to amend the Financial Administration Act, as reported (without

[Mr. Abbott.]

amendment) from the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (for Mr. Andre) moved motion No. 1:

That Bill C-10, An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act, be amended in Clause 1 by striking out lines 11 to 16 at page 1 and substituting the following therefor:

"pleasure, and he shall rank as and have all the powers of the deputy head of a department.

(2.2) The Comptroller General of Canada shall design, develop, implement and monitor such systems that will ensure that

- (a) the form of Estimates provides a sound basis for budgetary control;
- (b) public monies and assets are under effective custody and control at all times;
- (c) accounting procedures and financial reports conform to accepted accounting principles and standards;
- (d) expenditures of public monies are made with due regard for economy and efficiency; and
- (e) satisfactory procedures measure the effectiveness of government programs;

and without restricting the generality of the foregoing shall perform such additional duties and functions as may be assigned to him by the Treasury Board."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): It is presumed that motion No. 2 will not be proceeded with as it is identical to motion No. 1 which has just been put. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): It is so ordered.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this amendment, which is to amend clause 1 of the bill, is to carry out the declared view of the official opposition that the bill creating the office of comptroller general should define the duties of that office. On the other hand, the government, in its proposal, says the comptroller general, who is to be one of the watchdogs for parliament, is to have his or her duties defined by the Treasury Board. This, to my mind, is a total negation of the purpose of setting up the office. It is as though, when the office of Auditor General was set up, we were to provide that his duties be set by the Minister of Finance and that he should act through the Minister of Finance. That is no watchdog position. Frankly, the set up is simply mechanistic.

● (1612)

I have met the new Comptroller General. I have discussed certain matters with him at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates. I wanted to find out from him precisely what he thought his functions were.

If we turn to page 28.28 of the Blue Book on estimates we read the following as a description of the objective in mind when the office of comptroller general was proposed to be set up:

In accordance with the responsibility delegated by the Privy Council as set out in the Financial Administration Act to ensure the quality and integrity of financial control systems and related administrative practice and procedures designed to operate after and within the authorization of the allocation of resources by the government and by parliament.