

*Investment Canada Act*

available we will be able to tell private companies and small and large businesses that are potential investors that we know what kind of investment we want and that they will not have to go through a review process and face unnecessary delays. There will be no excuse for them not to invest.

I believe that this legislation is a very sensible approach to the whole question of foreign investment. The fact that new businesses will be exempt from review seems to be a very commonsense approach. Why should anyone who has some money and wants to start a new business in this country be prevented from doing so? Of course, there is provision for protective measures in areas of particular concern to our cultural heritage. Of course, I support that and I know that it is important to protect.

Potential purchasers of businesses with less than \$5 million in assets will be able to proceed with those investments without review. The Minister gave some interesting examples of that this morning. This means that approximately 80 per cent of businesses will be exempt from review, according to the Bill. Indirect acquisitions involving more than \$50 million will be subject to review. Although it is difficult to determine such a figure, we know that indirect acquisitions of more than that sum involve major acquisitions the impact of which might be questioned. We will have the opportunity to review those acquisitions. Most other acquisitions that are relatively routine will be welcomed and processed quickly.

This legislation also corrects a number of other problems in the review process. I believe the most important problem concerns the timing. Many of us have been involved in dealing with the bureaucracy from which we cannot get an answer. Eventually people give up or not even try. This legislation makes such dealings very clear. The Minister must be efficient because he has 30 days in which to respond.

**Mr. Manly:** Forty-five.

**Mrs. Collins:** Plus the 45 days, if they are advised. If they are not advised, the acquisition is exempt. I believe that is fair because the onus should be on the Government to indicate that there may be a problem and a review is necessary. This will ensure that these issues are dealt with in a timely manner. Since the onus is on the Minister to make the decision, it eliminates the need to go through Cabinet.

We can assure those who are interested in investing in Canada and whose application exceeds the limits of exemption that their review will be conducted fairly and in a timely manner.

I am also pleased to see the change in how the assessment will be done. I have always had some difficulty in understanding what "significant benefit" meant. I could not relate it to anything from my personal experience, and I believe that a change to the concept of "net benefit" will enable us to deal with these applications in a more businesslike manner. Our method of assessing that benefit will be more clearly understood by all those involved.

We have also added criteria to ensure that these investments are compatible with cultural policy. We will look at the effect of international competitiveness to make sure that these criteria are not only fair but ensure that these investments which are subject to review are compatible with our national goals.

We need the investment. I must disagree with the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) in that respect. We must remember that our country is still young. We have had relatively little time to accumulate a lot of wealth. While Canadians are among the best savers in the world, we do not have the mass accumulation of money that is required to develop our resource industries or alternative industries that are required in this country.

Several years ago, at the national policy convention of the Conservative Party, I had the opportunity to discuss this issue. One of my colleagues on the panel conducted an analysis on how much money this country needed in the next few years. His assessment at that time was that we would need approximately \$1.5 trillion during the 1980s and \$4.5 trillion during the 1990s. There is no way that our own economy can generate that kind of savings or equity. We must go outside to attract that equity in order for Canada to grow.

What we do have is great human energy because we are a young country. Canadians have ideas, and I believe that is what the more mature societies in the rest of the world are looking for. I believe that Europe, the United States and the Pacific Rim countries are interested in what we have to offer. I think we have a tremendous potential of developing partnerships to expand our expertise and our human energy along with the dollars from other societies.

Hon. Members opposite are concerned about the risks involved. I find this concern rather interesting because it seems to reflect a very negative attitude toward the human spirit. It is as if everything in life had to be controlled because we have no sense of faith in ourselves. I fundamentally disagree with that concept. I believe that we are a nation of risk-takers and our Government wants to encourage the risk-takers in this country. We want to encourage those who have capital to use it in partnership with other capital to take risks and invest in opportunities in this country in order to create the jobs that we so badly need.

I had the opportunity to return to my riding of Capilano on the weekend to talk to some business people there about their initial reaction to the investment Canada Bill. The reactions were all positive. I believe they see it as a sign of hope and the fulfilment of a commitment by the Government.

I also had the opportunity to get some reaction from people in Calgary where I used to live. The reaction of the energy industry, upon whom we are counting to make major new investment for the creation of jobs, has been truly positive. The Independent Petroleum Association and the CPA have both lauded the efforts of the investment Canada Bill. They predict that it will result in new drilling activity. It is another step in the right direction toward the kind of positive climate they need to make those investments.