

trouble in maintaining our large volume of sales to that market. All of these factors point to a great need for extensive effort by the government to increase our exports of labour intensive products, namely our finished manufactured products. Anyone can sell raw materials. In fact, we practically have to put up barriers to stop the flow of them out of the country at a faster rate than we desire. Selling our manufactured products will be a very difficult job in the future. We must do whatever we can to increase these sales to our two biggest markets, the United States and Great Britain. We must do whatever we can to increase our sales to our third biggest market, Japan and the European Common Market. We must find our markets wherever we can, and we need increased markets very badly.

Some ten years ago the government, of which I was a member, was faced with exactly the same problem the government is faced with today. We had serious unemployment in 1960. Something had to be done and we decided to make a tremendous effort to increase the exports of those products which in turn would result in an increase in employment. We put on an export drive which was successful. We did a number of things. I will not bore hon. members by going into them all now, but I should like to mention three things because I feel they would be equally effective today.

• (3:20 p.m.)

First of all, we greatly increased our participation in trade fairs throughout the world in an effort to show Canadian goods to people on the ground where the market was and to show them what we could produce. We made a tremendous increase in the number of sales and in the number of exporters who participated. This paid off enormously. Second, we increased by not less than six times the number of trade missions we had sent abroad previously. We sent trade missions abroad composed of Canadian producers so that they could see what the conditions for sales were in the countries in which they wanted to sell their goods. In this manner, they could determine what styles were needed, what kind of pricing was needed and so on in order to make sales. They came back and changed their methods of production, their styles and pricing and made goods to suit those markets. This increased sales very materially.

The third thing we did—these are three of the many things we did but are the three I wish to mention to the House today—was fly in large numbers of buyers, first of all from the four main United States markets, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. These buyers were brought to trade fairs in Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver where they were shown our manufactured goods. We showed those potential buyers what we could produce in Canada. They were very interested and many orders resulted.

Finally, we put on a tremendous exhibition to which we brought people from all over the world. We brought some 600 buyers here to see what Canada could produce in the way of finished goods and heavy machinery, another great potential sale item for Canada. This pro-

Export Development Act

duced great results, but there was nothing clever about it. We simply applied ordinary, business common sense to government operations. In order to sell things, you must show them to the people to whom you wish to sell them and make them available at a price and in a quality and style which will produce orders. If you do not do this, the buyer will not buy and if you do there is a good chance he will.

These are the kinds of things business does when it is faced with the type of problem facing the government today which is an urgent need for greatly increased sales of manufactured products. I offer these suggestions to this government in all sincerity. I do not suggest we were in any way clever or smart in producing these ideas. They were the ideas of business and business helped make them work. The important thing is they did work. In one year these ideas turned 10 years of continuous trade deficits into a surplus, and from then on the country never looked back. This scheme reversed rising unemployment, which is a matter of tremendous importance to the country today, and laid the foundation for the prosperity of the sixties. So, I simply urge this government to seriously consider this matter and consider adopting some of the methods that were useful at that time in order to do what the government must do for the country today. It must increase sales of manufactured goods because they are the labour intensive products we turn out. The government must reverse the rising tide of unemployment and put the economy of the country back on its feet.

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, the program embodied in the Export Development Act is very important to many Canadians. To give one example, it is very important to many farmers in western Canada. They watch the performance of the export credit insurance program very carefully. They regard it as being one of the important instruments whereby export sales can be facilitated. I should say this, of course, applies in many other regions of Canada and in respect of many other products. Certainly, with regard to wood and wood products, minerals and processed mineral products as well as many other manufactured products, the program is of considerable importance in promoting exports. However, one would not realize the importance of this program on the basis of the minister's attentiveness to this particular bill which is before us today. I say this with the greatest respect to the Parliamentary Secretary who introduced the bill for second reading. I noticed the minister was present for the question period. Then, he spent some time behind the curtains discussing something with some hon. members, but at no time was he paying any attention to the comments being made in respect of the bill now before us.

I think the importance of the instrument established by this act is illustrated by the fact that the act was passed first of all in May of 1969. It was introduced for first reading in March, 1969. I refer to the Export Development Corporation Act. Only one and one-half years later, in November 1970, the government introduced another