

do not mean "it is not possible to attract investment, but it isn't the 1950s or the 1960s any more."

When the minister introduced the bill last December, he emphasized:

The Investment Canada Bill is one measure among many this Government intends to take to dismantle needless barriers to enterprise in this country.

The government's intentions to respond to international expectations are to be seen in the budget and will be evident wherever we have the opportunity to clarify or enhance our reputation as reasonable and eager partners.

But do not let us, in this debate, in any way detract from the singular importance of Investment Canada. Its replacement of the Foreign Investment Review Agency does so much to demolish the petty, bureaucratic and often inane pretensions of the 1974 legislation that it stands on its own as a forward and positive response to Canadian needs.

It exempts all new businesses from review. It limits review of direct acquisition by non-Canadians to businesses with assets of \$5 million or more and indirect acquisitions, resulting from the acquisition of parent companies outside Canada, where the Canadian subsidiary acquired has assets of \$50 million or more.

In terms of actual cases, both take overs and new investments, the new agency will screen only 10 per cent of what it does now. The government reserves rights in the culturally sensitive sectors, including publishing, film production and distribution.

Of immense importance is the fact that the bill provides for a specific mandate to encourage investment for growth and jobs. It provides information services and advises businesses and investors on opportunities and contacts. A somersault over the negativism of the previous government with its agency designed exclusively to find out what was wrong with attempts made from abroad to join in Canadian development.

In the lifetime of most of us in this chamber, Canada was a place that could take pride or whatever satisfaction seemed suitable for calling a spade a spade. In my town we had a rickety old building called the House of Refuge and, not a few blocks away, another monument to social conscience called the Home of the Friendless. Not far away, in Toronto, we prided ourselves on the existence of the Hospital for Incurable Children. However sympathetic those institutions might have been, they invited those who passed through their portals to abandon all hope. The Foreign Investment Review Agency—by its very name, and particularly by its acronym, FIRA—invited would-be investors or partners in the Canadian process to enter with little hope of refuge, fear of treatment as the friendless or identification as outfits incurably hostile to Canadian nationalism.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Doyle: Honourable senators opposite will argue that none of these dreadful doubts should have been raised about FIRA, that the agency never cost us an industry worth having or delayed an application for approval to the point where

eagerness turned to despair and the good people concerned simply went home.

Whatever it was, FIRA earned itself the best international reputation since Mata Hari, even before the estimable industry minister of the day threatened to strengthen the agency's powers and sharpen its appetites. Not even the minister's government would swallow that.

When the Investment Canada Bill was introduced, Keith Dixon, President of the Canadian Importers' Association, expressed delight. He said: "Anything is an improvement over FIRA." He went on to say:

I've just come back from a trip to the United States and FIRA is regarded like a mad dog down there.

Well, perhaps not a mad dog, but an ill-conceived agency that brought us no good.

The government has done something about that.

On motion of Senator Frith, on behalf of Senator Godfrey, debate adjourned.

THE ESTIMATES, 1985-86

CONSIDERATION OF FIFTH REPORT OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMITTEE—DEBATE CONCLUDED

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the consideration of the Fifth Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance (Main Estimates 1985-86), presented in the Senate on 30th May, 1985.—(*Honourable Senator Doody*).

Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I should like to take a few minutes of your time to respond to the speech made on Tuesday last by the Honourable Senator Leblanc. First of all, I should like to congratulate Senator Leblanc, the Chairman of the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, for an excellent speech and report. That is not unusual from the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance. It has a long tradition of excellent reports and excellent chairmen.

Senator Frith: Don't push!

Senator Doody: The Senate agreed long before I arrived that the proper function of the Senate Committee on National Finance in looking at the estimates would be to have it take a particular item and deal with it as best it could. That tradition has resulted in excellent results.

In studying this particular set of estimates, the committee held hearings on the aspects of post-secondary education. Of the five hearings which were held, I had the good fortune to be able to attend four. As was the chairman, I was struck by the complexity of the problem and the extent of the questions that kept surfacing every time we tried to examine an issue. That is not an easy area to understand. It seems like there were wheels travelling within wheels.

Despite my previous somewhat biased impression, it is clear that the Government of Canada has a clear and substantial