

In addition, the Member said, "We could not have government participation", yet he and his Party came in over a weekend with a \$260 million bail-out for the Canadian Commercial Bank where only a handful of jobs were involved as opposed to 2,000 or 3000 Canadian jobs right here in the Ottawa area in the case of Mitel.

**Mr. Dick:** I did not say that. I asked you about it.

**Mr. Cassidy:** As far as the various approvals that are required are concerned, the Mitel board has indicated that this is a friendly takeover and not a hostile one. British Telecom would not make a bid if its board were not on side. As for the shareholders of Mitel, there is enough control in the hands of the controlling shareholders that they are pretty likely to get approval, and the Canadian Government is in fact the only bullwark, the only avenue of defence, against Mitel's control going into foreign hands. The Canadian Government, through FIRA, has the right to do that. Unfortunately, as has been pointed out, all foreign takeovers which have gone before FIRA since this Government took power have been approved. This Government is even more open for business and less a guardian of Canadian industry than the Liberal Government under which 93 per cent were approved. We suspect, without knowing because FIRA has been so secretive under the Liberals and the Conservatives, that the conditions placed on takeovers have been even less demanding under the Conservative Government than they were under the Liberal Government.

● (1630)

The Hon. Member asked me about my fear that the Government would give everything away and whether I could prove it. No, I cannot prove it. All I am saying is that the signs in the Investment Canada Bill and the signs in terms of the quick support without a lot of thought given to the Mitel takeover by the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion indicate to multi-nationals everywhere in the world that if they want to come into Canada and take over a few companies, they are welcome to do so—no ifs, ands or buts, no conditions—and if they want to move them out of Canada afterwards, the Government will not try to stop them.

**Mr. Dick:** That is not what he said, and you know it.

**Mr. Cassidy:** That is exactly what the Minister said. That is the signal he and his Party are sending by the way Conservative Members talked during the campaign and by the way they acted and brought forward the Investment Canada Bill. I remind the House that the Investment Canada Bill is almost the only substantive piece of legislation we have seen from the Government in its first eight months of office.

Are there alternative means to protect the jobs at Mitel apart from a foreign takeover? Of course there are. The Government found a quarter of a billion dollars for CCB, to protect investors in California. When such an important Canadian company is involved, it seems to me that government participation as part of a partnership to refinance Mitel, which was already recovering from the difficulties of last year and

### Supply

the year before, would have been a creative option that should have been explored. I regret the fact that that was not done by the Government.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question and a comment, but I will be brief. The former Government put anvils around our collective necks, slit our wrists and threw us into a school of piranhas with the greatest deficit in our history. We are talking here about jobs and dollars and cents. Fortunately, on September 4 we were saved by the people of Canada who pulled us from that river of debt and gave us a second chance. That second chance is to encourage—and I underline the word "encourage"—more foreign investment in Canada. Today's opposition motion condemns the cutting off of debate on the important issue of foreign investment legislation. We have had debate. We have spent dozens and dozens of hours, as the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens) explained this morning, and as the Hon. Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco) explained this afternoon. I cannot understand this paranoia about not having enough debate on this whole question.

I would like to refer to something which I think is very relevant in that we are talking about the debate on foreign investment. I have a study which was conducted by the Conference Board of Canada entitled *The Foreign Investment Review Agency—Images and Realities*. It contains some quotations by very knowledgeable and experienced businessmen, one of which reads:

We have never experienced anything as fearsome as FIRA before.

Another reads:

— on a scale of one to ten I would rate Canada a zero. Canada is in a class by itself.

Some class! Another quotation reads:

FIRA is an interventionist nationalistic policy the likes of which I have never seen anywhere else.

I would like to refer to the document entitled *The Future of Foreign Investment in Canada*, produced by the Conference Board of Canada and dated January, 1985. I should add that the Conference Board is a very highly respected institute and is an independent body. In part it reads:

Debating the virtues of various approaches to the control of foreign investment is fast becoming a luxury that Canada can ill afford.

Does the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Centre (Mr. Cassidy) agree or disagree? Yes or no.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Mr. Speaker, I would simply say that I disagree with the statement. As the Hon. Member should well know, Britain, France, United States, Japan and almost every other industrial country have substantial restraints, limitations or agencies to set conditions on foreign investment, as does Canada. We can debate the kinds of controls or how conditions should be adapted as time goes on and conditions change. I have no trouble with that, but to abandon those restraints completely, which is the position of large numbers of Members in the Conservative Party, including the present Minister, is a policy of folly.