

*Canadian Commercial Corporation*

other words, you have a falling off of business, other than that for the Department of National Defence, of nearly 50 per cent?

**Mr. McIlraith:** No—that is true if you take other purchases to include the \$21 million for UNRRA. The work for UNRRA ended in the last fiscal year; so if you take the other governments it is a falling off from \$55 million to \$42 million.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Muskoka-Ontario):** That still leaves out one branch of the business which I thought was quite substantial. In other words you are acting for private individuals, with respect to both import and export? Not all your business, import and export, is contained in the figures you have given me, where governments are concerned?

**Mr. McIlraith:** Yes, all the business is included in the figures I have given. Perhaps I can clarify the point by reading a list of the agencies purchasing in the current fiscal year; that might give a fairer picture. They include Mozambique; China; the United Kingdom; France; Czechoslovakia; Netherlands; Netherlands East Indies; South Africa; a very small, insignificant item here for the Department of External Affairs; United Nations international children's emergency fund; Germany; the joint import and export agency; the international refugee organization; United Nations relief for Palestine refugees; United States; fisheries prices support board; the metal transaction referred to yesterday; India; Portugal and Pakistan. Then there was the butter transaction. In the list I have just read they are almost all exports except the metals, the butter and the fertilizer transaction.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. Hon. gentlemen will kindly address their remarks to the Chair.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Muskoka-Ontario):** I beg your pardon.

**Mr. Fulton:** And could we have a little quiet in the chamber, Mr. Chairman, so we could hear what is going on?

**Mr. Macdonnell (Muskoka-Ontario):** Do I understand that the Canadian Commercial Corporation seeks to interest itself in and acts in respect of all business where foreign governments are concerned? If not, how do you select those in which you act and those in which you do not act?

**Mr. McIlraith:** We provide an agency they can use for their government purchases in Canada, and it is only at their request. Of course there are other safeguards concerning payment.

**Mr. Thatcher:** I cannot understand why that must be our policy. What is the point

in setting up a corporation which could play some real role in Canadian trade, and then not making effective use of it? Are we not handicapping this corporation in advance if we say to it, "You cannot do anything unless some private company comes along and asks you to commence work." That sort of corporation is not going to give the people of Canada the satisfaction they want. I do not know how I can get this point over to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Perhaps he would think back thirty years, when he was a young, healthy, virile man. I wonder how much satisfaction he would have got thirty years ago if he had tried to kiss a beautiful blonde girl through a plate glass window. I do not think he would have had very much satisfaction. Neither will the people of Canada receive satisfaction from the restricted activities of the Canadian Commercial Corporation today. We have set up a corporation which cannot function properly, because the minister will not let it do anything, unless some private company comes along and requests that it act. The people of Canada are not getting any more satisfaction from this corporation, than the minister would have got thirty years ago if he tried to do what I suggested. Surely this corporation should be allowed to take the initiative and go out to sell some of our surplus products. If some manufacturer has a surplus he cannot sell, why should not this corporation try to get rid of it overseas? I do not think full use is being made of the Canadian Commercial Corporation.

**Mr. Howe:** I point out to my hon. friend that Canada's exports last year were something over \$3 billion, while our imports were about \$2,500 million.

**Mr. Thatcher:** Yes, but we gave away a lot of it.

**Mr. Howe:** Surely my hon. friend would not suggest that all this business be done through the corporation. The Canadian Commercial Corporation is an agency set up to act for other governmental agencies either inside or outside Canada if it is requested to do so. If the pattern of a foreign country is state buying, and if the state buying agency asks Canada to offer something, that offer is made through the Canadian Commercial Corporation; but that represents only a fraction of the business of this country. In connection with wheat, for instance, the wheat-buying agencies of the countries abroad purchase direct from the Canadian wheat board, which is a government agency for selling wheat in this country. There are specialized government agencies for handling certain other transactions; but the great bulk of the trading even with countries in Europe, and