

Export Credits Insurance Act

and other similar contracts mentioned last evening. This is a discretionary matter initiated by the board. The board in dealing with a contract of insurance reaches certain conclusions and requests the minister to make application to the governor in council. There is nothing within the ambit of the legislation or inherent in the principle involved that calls upon the government to do what hon. gentlemen have suggested should have been done, and as time goes on I believe we will be satisfied that this is the case.

The hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) dealt with a point raised by hon. members of the official opposition yesterday. The remarks of hon. gentlemen opposite in this respect clearly reflect the restrictionist trade program of the Liberal party and, in particular, its apparent dislike of those measures which formed the subject of some criticism on their part yesterday and today.

In my opinion we are fortunate in having a government that recognizes the great importance of trade in the world today, unlike the previous government which rigidly, even slavishly, adhered to the Washington line when dealing with projects of this nature, and which is prepared to have full regard for the interests of Canada and the Canadian people.

I shall leave that point at this time. I believe there was some question in Your Honour's mind as to the relevance of that subject to this debate and I believe Your Honour did restrict it. In view of that I shall say no more at this time.

When the history of today's period is written I think the value of measures of this kind will be proved. I hope these amounts will be increased over the years. I think it will be proved that measures of this nature have played a great part in the preservation and advancement of a more peaceful and happier world.

I am interested in the new emerging nations of Africa. In the last few years a number of countries there have come to a state of nationhood. They find themselves with a fantastic paucity of material resources and low standards of education. I believe it has been estimated that between \$100 billion and \$250 billion may well have to be poured into that continent in order to assist those nations to achieve a reasonable standard of living. To reach this objective they will have to export, but this will be impossible for them until they can provide themselves with plant and equipment geared to that purpose.

That is the purpose of this particular legislation. I am relating it particularly to the countries in Africa and the necessity of those countries in the free world which have the resources being able to supply to the newly

emerging nations of Africa the machinery and the equipment to open the mines, to build the roads and to build the schools which are so very essential.

Directed to that end I think there can be no criticism of this legislation. Then as I say, I think we shall probably find that, in the not too distant future, we may be obliged to increase it. Consequently for my part, disregarding what in my opinion were the irrelevant criticisms advanced by the official opposition, I strongly support this bill and commend it to the house.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): If we on this side of the house, Mr. Speaker, seek to obtain information with regard to this amendment, that fact cannot be interpreted as suggesting that we are in any way, shape or form in favour of a restrictionist trade policy. The record of our party on that matter is clear. However, that record should not and will not prevent us from trying to find out all we can about this amendment under which we shall be increasing the limit of liability from \$200 million to \$300 million. An expenditure of \$100 million is a fairly important proposal to put before the house. The information we are seeking has to do with both the omission of certain transactions from the operation of this act and on the other hand the inclusion of certain transactions within the operation of the Export Credits Insurance Act.

The question of omission was dealt with by the previous speaker. It was dealt with by my friend the hon. member from Ottawa West (Mr. McIlraith) at some length. It is an important matter, especially the omission from this act of the credit sales of grain to China and other communist countries—but particularly to China—which are dealt with outside the provisions of this act. Had they been dealt with inside its provisions so far as insurance is concerned, all the relevant information in connection with these transactions would have been made known to this house. However, that is not the situation that exists now.

So far as the inclusion of certain transactions within this act is concerned, it brings up another question, and it surely is relevant to a discussion of this bill and indeed it was considered as being relevant to a discussion of the resolution. It brings up the question of the measures for control of the export of certain commodities to certain sensitive areas, if I may call them that. If I raise this question, Mr. Speaker, it is in order to ensure that before this bill is passed we have all the relevant information in respect of this aspect of the operation of the bill. When we try to get that information,