

The Minister has listened to us in committee. I hope that he will listen to us again and make some amendments to present to us with respect to Motion No. 1. I hope he will bring before us changes to his original motion so that we can tell the public that the Government is trying to co-operate with the concerns of the citizens of Canada and that the Government is trying to make the Export Development Corporation a vehicle to create jobs in Canada.

What we are talking about when discussing EDC is jobs, Mr. Speaker—creating jobs through successful Canadian organizations and corporations. This is a vehicle that is helping to solve the unemployment problem. I appreciate having been afforded the opportunity to speak on this Motion, Mr. Speaker, and I will look forward to speaking on other motions that come before the House.

**Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Lethbridge-Foothills):** Mr. Speaker, I too would like to speak to Motion No. 1 amending the Bill. I would particularly like to do so before the Minister speaks because I hope the Minister will respond to some of the concerns I have vis-à-vis this Motion and the process in general. Since 1979, I as a Member of Parliament have seen several hundreds of Bills go through the House. The process is essentially defective and I wonder if the Minister would respond to it.

At second reading of the Bill, as with so many other Bills, we in the Official Opposition favoured a great deal of the Bill because it is good for the country; but perhaps because we represent different interests in the community than do Government Members, we came back from our ridings with legitimate and bona fide concerns about certain areas and clauses of the Bill. At second reading of a Bill, we point those concerns out and hope that at the committee stage the Government will consider the second reading debate and come forward ready to accept some changes.

There are seven motions to amend this Bill. At the committee stage, however, those motions were discussed and, in effect, rejected by the Cabinet even though the Minister, with respect to Motion No. 1, agreed in principle with much of what was said in terms of whether the board of directors should be predominantly public servants or from the non-public service.

The situation is that the Minister agreed in committee that the board should be composed of people from private industry who have real skills or hands-on experience, and yet now when we come back to the House the motion is rejected. I wonder if the Minister could advise us whether it is he personally who has rejected those motions. Has he rejected these motions because of civil service input, or were they rejected at the Cabinet level? If the rejection came from the Cabinet level, why does the Cabinet not accept his recommendations as Minister? I would appreciate his comments as to whether it was his personal opinion, the bureaucracy input which convinced him, or the opinion of the Cabinet. I am sure that, in private at least, the Minister would agree that there is a great deal of input from Members of the House that is wise, even though that input might come from this Party or from the New Democratic Party or his own backbenchers. Yet that input

### *Export Development Act*

does not reflect itself in the Bills that ultimately pass through the House.

So, Mr. Speaker, we waste the incredibly valuable time of the House debating motions. There will be seven of them and we will go on for days and days. This is simply because the Government, through some process, is unable to accept reasonable amendments. Perhaps the Minister could comment as to whether or not the Government sees itself losing control if it accepts amendments from across the floor or if the process is defective. Now that we are dealing with parliamentary reform, what does the Minister think we can do to get away from what may be a defective process?

● (1220)

Speaking to Motion No. 1, the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) stood up and very carefully and nicely attacked the Conservative Party for trying to substitute private industry officials for public officials, which, in a sense, is true. We have set forth our reasons for that. These people are out in the industry and they understand it better than public servants who have other things to do. He attacked the Conservative Party, but I notice that the NDP have put up no amendments at all. Presumably that Party is prepared to accept the Government position where all members of the board are drawn from the public sphere.

I think the Hon. Member misread the Bill. If I understood him correctly, he was saying that employees of provincial Crown corporations who would be qualified to serve on the board would be excluded under the terms of the Bill. I do not read the Bill that way. Clearly, our amendment excludes only public servants of Canada, directly or indirectly; in the provincial Governments the only people excluded are direct public servants. Indirect public servants, that is employees of Crown corporations, could be appointed.

In the main motion there is nothing to block the appointment of workers or other people in the community; nor is there in the amendment which would weight the board of directors in favour of private industry.

There is no doubt that in the past the primary problems with respect to the EDC related to the accountability of the board of directors and the knowledge of the operating staff. Over all, the corporation has done a pretty good job, although some changes could be made to make it more effective. Such amendments are being rejected by the Government, however. I do not understand why, in Bill after Bill after Bill, there must be a fight on second reading, a big fight at committee and a big fight at report stage. I think the problem lies somewhere in the Cabinet or in the civil service and I hope the Minister will respond to that so that we will know where the trouble lies.

The problem of accountability is a bad one. There is a situation in Calgary where Petro-Canada erected an enormous building and is now renting space for \$10 per square foot. The true cost should be \$20 per square foot to cover the cost of construction and \$25 per square foot to make a profit. Billions of dollars are being used directly—