

would all rest in private hands to the fullest extent permitted by the exigencies of international trade.

The corporation in all instances, except when purchasing on government account, will require suitable coverage in the appropriate foreign exchange, in the form of guarantees on acceptance of the order, and actual exchange on acceptance at seaboard in the countries of origin.

The Canadian Commercial Corporation also will provide a means which, if desirable, can be used, in the future, for purchasing commodities under international allocation or foreign government control such as sugar, tea, oils and fats which may, owing to the shortages which now exist, continue under such governmental regulation for some time to come. Although the corporation thus provides machinery capable of assuming responsibility for the bulk purchasing now carried out by the Commodity Prices Stabilization Corporation, it is not proposed that it shall do so, so long as profit control and subsidies remain in effect.

In its capacity of purchasing agent, the Canadian Commercial Corporation will award contracts on the basis of competitive sealed tenders in all cases where it is practicable to do so—having regard, of course, to the utilization of surplus stocks owned by the crown. Save where the goods to be exported are in free supply, a clearance is obtained from the export permit branch of my department, before purchase action is initiated, so that there is no danger of the domestic market being stripped of essential supplies by the export purchasing of the Canadian Commercial Corporation.

The Canadian Commercial Corporation will make a small charge for its services for the purpose only of covering the cost of its administration expenses.

Despite the fact that there is no compulsion on any of the agencies representing other governments to avail themselves of the purchasing machinery of the corporation, the extensive use made of its facilities and those of its predecessor, the Canadian export board, indicates clearly the appreciation of such governments of the manner in which the work has been carried out and the ready access to the Canadian market thus afforded them.

I have spoken at this length to give the house as full a statement as possible of the purposes which the Canadian Commercial Corporation was incorporated to serve and the principles under which it will operate. There is, however, one point I cannot stress too strongly; that is, that the policy of

government by which the Canadian Commercial Corporation will be guided is that it shall, at all times, seek to provide supplementary services necessary to assist Canadian traders to obtain access to world markets. I do not propose that it shall occupy, or in any way trespass upon, the field normally reserved for private business. I would like to make that assurance as clear and emphatic as possible. I believe that this corporation will play a role of growing magnitude in assisting the vigorous expansion of Canadian trade which, during the years immediately ahead, will be of such vital importance to us all. That is why I respectfully commend this Bill to the favourable consideration of the house. It is not practicable at this time to anticipate just what calls for assistance may be made upon the corporation by private business from time to time, as, for instance, in the case of state trading by other nations, and it is felt that it would be unwise to delimit its purposes and usefulness by a too precise detailing of its activities. These functions inevitably will be influenced by practical experience, the acknowledged needs of Canadian business, and the changes occurring so swiftly in the pattern of world trade in these difficult days, but the welcome already extended to the Canadian Commercial Corporation by the Canadian business community provides ample proof that this new agency is destined to make a most constructive contribution to the restoration, development and enlargement of our trade.

Mr. H. R. JACKMAN (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the minister on the resolution concerning the Canadian Commercial Corporation have been interesting, and I am sure the house took it as a matter of some importance that already this organization had purchased some \$404,000,000 worth of goods, probably mainly for other countries the minister did not name and for UNRRA.

Mr. MacKINNON: That was the predecessor of this organization.

Mr. JACKMAN: That is right. As I understand it, this bill is to incorporate by statute the Canadian Commercial Corporation which was set up under P.C. 1218, dated March 29, 1946. The minister did remark, however, that he expected this agency would have a continuing basis. While Canadian businessmen may have found it of some use during the transition period following the close of the war, I wonder whether or not it really has a function in our economy as a permanent fixture. I say that because Canadian business does not want to see our government engage