

United Aircraft

tion meeting certain minimal standards of good corporate citizenship.

In short, the United Aircraft situation is a highly particular but highly symbolic case illustrating many of the problems we face in Canadian society, and more particularly, labour problems and the issue of federal incentive grants to corporations. The United Aircraft Corporation, as I have documented in another speech in the House in a more systematic way than I will this afternoon, has received millions of dollars in assistance from the government in recent years in the form of outright grants and in the form of repayable loans.

The reasons for those grants and the purposes for which they were to be spent were entirely laudable. They were to be spent to do research and development, and ultimately to produce first-rate aircraft engines; and this is what in fact occurred: there was developed by Canadian technicians and skilled workers at Longueuil a very successful aircraft engine which gained widespread acceptance in world markets. It was a first-rate project from that point of view.

The workers in that plant began negotiations some time before, but just some 16 months ago, in January of 1974, the strike resulted and it is still in progress. What were the demands at that time, and were they reasonable? It seems to me they wanted wage levels comparable to other workers in the same industry. They wanted the Rand formula to be applied in industry, something which has been accepted by good corporate citizens throughout—

Mr. Blais: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I simply want to reiterate the original point I made. Evidently the hon. gentleman is attempting to make a speech about the Longueuil strike at United Aircraft. He is not at all interested in the production of documents; he is attempting to make a political speech. He has the right to make political speeches, but now is not the time to do so.

● (1710)

He is sitting beside a gentleman who is most knowledgeable of the rules of the House, so surely he could seek counsel about whether it is proper for him to make comments on the desirability of the strike without even once mentioning what he is seeking to have produced, or the purpose of the production.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, I would say there are times when that point of order is justified in this five o'clock hour, but surely it is recognized that if my hon. friend is seeking to persuade this House to call for the production of certain papers, and it happens that those papers are copies of contracts and correspondence, he has the right to make the case as to why they should be tabled. It will then be a matter of judgment for the Chair as to whether he is straying too far from the facts needed to justify his case. It seems to me, however, that he is trying to make a case for his proposition, which is that certain papers should be tabled. As long as he is doing that, I believe he is in order.

Mr. Blais: Madam Speaker, I agree with the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). He has indicated what the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby

[Mr. Broadbent.]

(Mr. Broadbent) did not indicate when he launched into a political speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I will read again the motion as it was put:

That an order of the House do issue for copies of all correspondence between United Aircraft and the government—

Perhaps the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent) would address his remarks to that subject.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, that is precisely what I am addressing myself to. For a normal set of reasonable, intelligent and conscientious human beings, an explanation could be given in three minutes; but for members of the Liberal Party a minimum of 20 minutes is needed. I am trying to provide an argument that even an average member of the Liberal Party could understand—and that takes a lot of effort.

We have a motion for the production of papers that says the government should provide the contracts so that this House can understand what kind of obligations were entered into between the government and the company. Did they deal with the labour situation, or did they not? Did they entail certain obligations for production in Canada so that it could not be transferred back to the United States and so adversely affect our workers? Did the contracts make provision for dealing with what is known as scab labour in a strike situation? I should have thought these things were almost self-evident to a normal, intelligent human being but I understand that for a Liberal it takes more time.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Cut the interruptions; I have had two interruptions in five minutes. If I could now address myself—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. The hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais) on a question of privilege.

Mr. Blais: I want to say that this poor, simpleminded Liberal knows the distinction between jurisdiction which is—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. Would the hon. member please resume his seat? This is not a question of privilege. The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, I shall try to ignore the noise over there and deal with the issue. I was saying that the original demands of the workers at the time of the strike beginning early in 1974 were those widely accepted by the labour movement and employers elsewhere in Canada for many years, but apparently were not accepted by this company. I sought the contracts they signed with the government which provided them with millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money. I wanted to see those contracts to find out if the workers were given any protection at all. We have had partial revelation of the contracts but we have not seen all of them. I wanted to see the correspondence between the federal government and the