

Export Development Act

international market. The narrowmindedness of those power-hungry individuals on the other side of the House—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Blais:—never ceases to amaze me because even though they may figure that one issue may be politically advantageous in the short run, the next 18 months or two years, they forget that Canada does not operate in the short term. Canada addresses its future to the long term. We want to ensure not only jobs for today and tomorrow, but we want to ensure the existence of an industrial structure in this country which will ensure jobs for the next generation.

We are competing with the whole world to create those jobs in Canada here today for the future and one of the areas is the aerospace industry. Why? Because it is an export sensitive industry. That is why the Government and the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, indeed every Province in this country, wants to find located within its boundaries—what? The aerospace industry. Even Nova Scotia does. The Hon. Member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall) will know full well that as a result of this Government's policies we have established in his Province a capacity in the aerospace industry that is—yes, IMP, and you know full well the reasons why IMP is developing.

Mr. Forrestall: My God, you were in diapers when IMP started. What are you talking about?

Mr. Blais: All I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker, is that EDC is essential if we are going to tap the international market. If we do, we are going to need money, and if the hon. gentlemen opposite think that in their short-term political interest they can make political points, I call upon them to think about the long-term future. It is their children who are going to be living in Canada, not just those of the Members on this side of the House, who are of course going to be in Government for some time to come.

Mr. Forrestall: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The debate has gone along quite well and we have, I think, as a general rule in the Chamber, respected the rules with respect to relevancy. I find it somewhat astonishing that a responsible Minister of the Crown would rise, take up 13 minutes of House time, and make absolutely no reference to the matter in front of us. Nor did he even make any reference to the Bill in general concerning the EDC. I think that perhaps there is some point beyond which the leniency of the Chair should not in fact properly go.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. The Hon. Member is, in the Chair's opinion, absolutely right. The Chair takes great care and pain to exercise the utmost leniency in determining whether a Member's remarks are relevant or not to the subject matter at hand. On many occasions the Chair sits quietly and gives the benefit of the doubt to the Hon. Member who has the floor, because it is anticipated that sooner or later the Hon. Member will deal with the heart of the matter. That happens regularly, in many speeches. How-

ever, in the matter involving the last two speakers, the Chair must say that they strayed somewhat far from the subject matter now being debated.

● (1550)

First, I should remind Hon. Members that we are dealing with the Export Development Act and motions which seek to amend two clauses thereto, and that some reference was made to them late in the speeches, I must say, but very little reference has been made. It turned out that the debate dealt with another Crown corporation altogether. In recognizing that the Chair has some difficulty in applying the rule of relevancy, and that Hon. Members are indeed seriously attempting, by illustration, to make valid points in debate, I would invite them to come back to the heart of the matter.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments on the Bill before the House and the amendments we are considering today, since they concern a fundamental principle—that is quite clear—namely, that Parliament must retain control over the expenditures of Crown corporations. I was listening earlier to the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Blais), whom I would like to congratulate on his new duties. The Minister inferred that the Progressive Conservative Party was more or less indifferent to the importance of Canadian technology and the expansion of Canadian industry. I did not particularly enjoy listening to the malicious and inappropriate comments the Minister of National Defence made before the House. The Minister did not, of course, deal with the contents of the Bill but reminded Hon. Members that the Export Development Corporation had made it possible to accomplish a great deal and, in doing so, had provided a stimulus for Canadian industry.

The Hon. Members opposite know perfectly well that we are entirely aware of the importance of Canadian exports, and that we want those exports to increase. We realize, Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this bill, that it is important for Canada to have access to foreign markets. We are in favour of such markets, and we support the Government provided—I think all of us and all Canadians will readily understand this—that Parliament retains control over the expenditure of public funds. It was true yesterday, and for the last 15 years, and especially the last 5 I must say that we have never seen a Government that has been so eager to dilute and diminish the power of Parliament to control expenditures. The Government is not alone in this building today. Parliament is here and it consists of all Canada's elected representatives. I believe that the responsibilities of these representatives consist in ensuring that public funds, that tax monies collected by the Canadian Government, are spent in a useful and positive manner and in the best interests of Canadians.

That is the principle we are defending in our debate on this Bill and in the amendments we are proposing. We want to make Government Members understand that Canadians want