

Investment Canada Act

spite of the NEP. Gross inflows varied between \$1-and \$1.4-billion throughout most of the 1970s, before skyrocketing during 1980 and 1981.

FIRA and the NEP did, however, seem to affect significantly the other side of the ledger, the so-called gross outflows of capital from Canada to the United States as Canadians bought back U.S. branch plants.

This trend to repatriation, accelerated by the NEP in particular, peaked in 1981. That year, a massive \$6.9-billion left the country, mainly to pay for the purchase by Canadians of U.S.-controlled energy firms resident in Canada.

But while the NEP affected repatriation, it did not seem to turn off the gross inflow of U.S. direct investment into Canada. For that too peaked in 1981, at \$3.2-billion. Gross inflows of U.S. direct investment began to decline significantly only in 1982 as the world recession took hold and raw material prices plummeted.

We are not going to cure the problems of Canada by merely changing the name. I strongly recommend that this amendment be considered most seriously. If you look at the responsibilities the Minister has arrogated to himself under Clause 5 you will see that he is really not rendering the country any service. I suggest that he review what he has undertaken and what his standing committee decided to accept. He should take a good hard look and be open-minded and open-spirited with respect to this amendment.

All amendments should withstand some of the litmus tests of our society. If the Minister is to share his perspective with Employment Canada and the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald), he might be in a position to ensure that the goals which the Government has been enunciating on employment equity are applied and followed through when foreign companies come in to purchase our companies.

The Minister and the Government have thrown down this welcome that. They are inviting the global corporation—which I gather is the new word for multinationals—to come in. They are saying that we are open for business. They must be reminded that we were always open for business, but in this time of stiffer competition money flows where it can be productive. If this money is to be productive the Minister should share his power with other members of the Cabinet, involving as many Ministers as possible.

We must recognize some stark realities. This is not the way that unemployment, particularly among our youth, the need for education and training, the problems of our aged, and the area of ecology and peace will be addressed. Those are the issues which need to be addressed. This Minister and his ministry can certainly do something. Perhaps it can be partly accomplished through this Bill.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I sincerely hope that some attention will have been paid, both to me and to the issue, and I hope that the amendments will be adopted.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments to make on the amendments which have been put forward on Clause 6 of Bill C-15. That clause establishes the agency, to be known as Investment Canada, to advise and assist the Minister in exercising his powers and performing his duties under this Act.

The amendments before us, which I hope the Government will consider accepting, seek to increase the power of the

Investment Canada agency in relation to the Minister who now has the final decision-making authority. These amendments suggest that in certain areas of ambiguity or uncertainty with respect to exercising its mandate, the agency be able to go directly to Cabinet for a decision. The objective of this, Mr. Speaker, is to put some distance between the agency and the Minister without changing the advisory role. This is part of a set of amendments aimed at strengthening the agency itself, as opposed to the Minister.

I regret that so little attention is being paid by the media to the clause by clause consideration of this Bill at report stage. The amendments we debated yesterday dealt with the secrecy aspects which are built into the new agency, as they were in FIRA. The first set of amendments we dealt with were with regard to giving some indication, in the purpose of the Bill, that we wanted the federal Government to show some discrimination in what form of investment it deemed to be beneficial. All these amendments are very helpful in pointing out some very fundamental differences between the Opposition Parties and the Government with regard to the issue of foreign investment.

This is not an ordinary Bill, Mr. Speaker. This Bill represents a drastic change in the way in which we see ourselves as a country and the way in which we understand our national economic integrity. For that reason, much more attention should be paid to the arguments which are being made on both sides of the House. The Government offers a view of Canada's economic future and integrity which is accepted by many Canadians. The Opposition also offers a view which is accepted by many Canadians. I find it regrettable that there is no reporting of the debate as it proceeds in the House.

The issue of foreign investment is absolutely central to the future of any country and to its understanding of itself. Only minutes ago I came from a meeting with Dr. Allan Boesak from South Africa. One of the things which we had occasion to speak about during that meeting was his contention that a change in the foreign investment activities of other countries in South Africa would have a beneficial effect on the struggle of black people there to achieve their freedom and get rid of Apartheid. I realize that that view is not accepted by a great many people. However, it is a view held by increasing numbers of people who are concerned about the situation in South Africa.

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They know that not just South Africa but the whole world is sitting on a time bomb that will eventually go off if countries like Canada do not put pressure on the South African Government to radically change its attitude and do away with apartheid.

While that is not a widely held view, I raise this question because it is an example, that is also evident in other countries, of how decisions about foreign investment not only affect the marketplace but the future of those countries in which the investments are made.