

Export Credits Insurance Act

make a scapegoat of Mr. Coyne, and we saw this move in 1959 as a sort of preliminary in that direction.

One of the principles of the bill, or one of the thoughts behind it, is to increase by one the number of directors other than those who are members of the corporation. I think we all have great esteem for the individuals who now hold office as appointed directors of the corporation. Inasmuch as each of them is well respected and is an admired member of the public service of Canada, I think we can expect—and if the minister said this earlier, I regret not having heard it or not having been in the house at that time—and hope that the additional director covered by the bill will also be appointed from the public service of Canada. I would hope and suggest that the appointee be someone from the Bank of Canada, preferably the present governor, who is in a closer relationship with the government than was the previous governor. I say this because it seems to me that this, being a crown corporation, and inasmuch as I understand there are at least 18 other nations in the world which participate with Canada in the Berne union and who also operate through government insurance plans such as this, that we should have someone involved in the international monetary fund and in the financial field from our own government services.

That is one of the reasons I suggest that the person who should be appointed as this additional director to replace former governor Coyne, who was fired from this position a couple of years ago, should be someone from the Bank of Canada, and preferably the present governor, Mr. Rasminsky.

I find it strange to hear in parliament the right wing, ultra-Tory advocates of individual initiative and free enterprise lauding legislation such as this. It indicates to me they have some doubts about the efficacy with which free enterprise operates in our economy.

Mr. Graffey: What is the hon. member's stand on nationalization?

Mr. Howard: Again we hear what I am sure was a delightful comment from the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graffey). Unfortunately I was not able to hear his delightful comment but perhaps he will take the opportunity of speaking later.

Mr. Chevrier: Always refreshing if not delightful.

Mr. Howard: It is interesting that those who wish free enterprise to operate untrammelled and unassisted should laud a measure such as this which is designed to employ public funds to ensure that private enterprise operates properly.

I do not dispute that this legislation is necessary. It represents a socialist concept that has been advocated for a number of years. I am sure there are a few right wing, ultra-Tory members still left in the Tory party. No doubt they will agree this legislation is necessary and beneficial to our economy.

In addition to providing insurance coverage for sales such as this we should be thinking in terms of expanding the operations of the Export Credits Insurance Corporation or a similar corporation, bringing into being an import-export board so that government facilities in Canada will insure sales of goods to other countries in a manner beneficial to this nation.

Certain companies are prohibited in Canada by United States law from selling goods and commodities to certain countries such as red China. If a board such as I have described were established as a government agency it could assist in the sale of non-strategic commodities to such countries to which some companies were formerly prohibited from selling by United States legislation. This type of thing should have developed by now to enhance our export position and provide employment to Canadian workers.

Like the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. McIlraith) I wonder why the recent sale of grain to China was not insured under the act. Similar sales in years past were protected and insured under this legislation. If a board such as I have described were established all such sales would be channelled through it and the details would be made public.

I submit one of the main reasons the government followed the course it did is that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Hamilton) had little to do with the sale of wheat and merely wished to cash in on the publicity.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It seems to me that the hon. gentleman is departing from the principle of the bill.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I wish briefly to commend the government and the minister for introducing amendments to this legislation. If I were to offer any criticism it would be that I hoped the amount involved would be larger. Later on I shall briefly explain why I take that position.

Let me deal with the point raised by the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. McIlraith) yesterday which was pursued this afternoon by the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat. As I understand the legislation and the principle involved, it is not mandatory that the government bring in contracts such as that relating to the sale of wheat to China