

*Investment Canada Act*

seen how the views of the Minister are not necessarily those of his Cabinet colleagues. For example, he was completely opposed to doing anything to help the Domtar situation, yet some of his Cabinet colleagues who were closer to the situation and more sensitive to it saw that there was a need for Government action in this area. Thankfully, the Minister was overruled.

Our Motion No. 20 simply provides that the agency will be able to go directly to Cabinet. This is particularly important when we are dealing with non-Canadian investment in such areas as culture or energy. I see we have the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Fraser) with us this morning. I would be interested to hear his opinion on this amendment. Would the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans like the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion to have the absolute discretion about investment in fish processing plants and aquaculture? Does he agree with leaving that absolute discretion in the hands of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, a person who knows absolutely nothing about the field with which the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is concerned?

● (1130)

We want to see a more independent agency that has access to Cabinet at times of real concern. If the Government follows our suggestion and appoints a person of some independence of thought and mind, if the Government follows its own promises and establishes an all-Party committee to vet senior appointments like this, then we would not simply have just another Tory hack, another patronage pay-off, but someone who might have some legitimate concerns that he or she would want to take to committee. I urge support for Motion No. 20.

Motion No. 19 moved by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry spells out the powers of the Minister that this agency is supposed to assist. Those powers, as spelled out in this motion are to help:

—the Minister in exercising his powers under this Act, to secure notifications and conduct reviews of investments by non-Canadians under this Act, and provide to other relevant federal Departments and agencies information about means to stimulate investment by Canadians in Canada.

These powers are very important, Mr. Speaker. We believe the intention of the Bill should spell them out.

Investment Canada should have information about notifications of investment. The Investment Canada Agency should be able to look at and examine these investments and determine whether or not they really are in the best interests of all Canadians. It should be able to conduct reviews. While we are abolishing the Foreign Investment Review Agency, there will have to be an element of review even though Members opposite might not like it. There still has to be somebody charged with the responsibility of ensuring that investment is for the benefit of Canada. There should be somebody charged with co-ordinating information and making sure that other government Departments are responsible. This fits in very well with our Motion No. 20 that would give Investment Canada direct access to Cabinet. It should have access to other federal Departments and be able to call them in to make sure that any

investment is co-ordinated to serve the best interests of all Canadians.

What we want is to strengthen Investment Canada so it can serve the real purposes of all Canadians. This is not a good Bill. We are not happy with it. We would like to see it improved in certain key areas, by strengthening Investment Canada, by giving the Agency access to Cabinet and by spelling out the powers and duties of the Minister that Investment Canada is supposed to assist. We do not want the Minister simply to have *carte blanche* for his open door policy. We want to see some vestige of a review process, and we want to see wherever possible that Investment Canada will have the option of going to Cabinet when it has a concern, and not be completely under the thumb of the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion.

**Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic):** Mr. Speaker, I have a few brief words on what is taking place today on Motion No. 19 and Motion No. 20. Having listened again to the Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands (Mr. Manly) and the Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria), it is very apparent that hon. gentlemen opposite have run out of things to say on this Bill. They have become extremely repetitive. I would admit that on occasions these two gentlemen do have good ideas and do have something to contribute to debate in this House. At the present time though they have run out of ideas. What we are witnessing is something we very often get at report stage on a Bill where there is a wide difference of opinion between the Parties represented in the House of Commons.

A number of motions have been introduced, not with the idea that they add or take away anything from the Bill, but just as a vehicle for debate and prolongment. The motions we are dealing with here are frivolous motions. They are meaningless. They are senseless motions.

**Mr. Gauthier:** That's nonsense.

**Mr. Nickerson:** The Opposition is using the occasion for delay. I do not mind the Opposition doing that. I spent a lot of my life on that side of the House. I am glad I am not there any longer. I am quite happy to be on this side. But what we will have to think about in the future is changing the Standing Orders of the House of Commons dealing with report stage on Bills.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Speak to the motion.

**Mr. Nickerson:** When we have a Bill of this nature the Opposition feels obliged to put motion after motion on the Order Paper and have these debated *ad infinitum*, thereby forcing the Government to bring in time allocation. That is something we do not want to do. We have been very lenient so far in this debate. There is no threat of time allocation closure as long as Opposition Members behave themselves—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!