

Government Orders

tain their export subsidies at higher levels than ours. The poorest countries on earth will be hit even harder than us by these measures, since they often do not subsidize their exports.

This measure threatens the access of developing countries to our markets. We should at least make sure that the wealthiest trade partners honour their commitment to lower the level and volume of their subsidies, in order not to reduce even further our competitiveness on international markets.

Furthermore, under section 424 of the Uruguay Round Agreement Act in the United States, the U.S. government will require the President to submit a report to Congress in which Canada's actions will be reported in order to see whether Canada is complying with the Uruguay Round and NAFTA commitments concerning dairy and poultry products. Why would Canada refuse for its part to anticipate what might happen?

Fourth and last, we propose adding to clause 3.4 guarantees so that the minister can ensure that the discretionary tariffs he establishes in case of shortages for some agricultural products set the price no lower than the Canadian market price. This is an important addition because it seeks to prevent importers from claiming a false shortage if they know that the minister will impose tariffs that are low enough to let them sell their imported products at a lower price than Canadian producers.

In conclusion, I would like to return to the spirit of clauses 3.1 and 3.2 and repeat that the amendments proposed by the Bloc Québécois are not simply an expression of Quebec sovereignist rhetoric. We want every Canadian province to be consulted by the federal government. We are just demanding the same kind of measure that the United States is about to vote on.

Canadian parliamentarians today have an opportunity to show that Canada is a flexible country. That is how the amendment now being debated should be seen.

• (1110)

Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to discuss Motion No. 2, which I would like to read again for the benefit of our listeners:

"3.1 Notwithstanding any provision of this Act or the Agreement, the Minister of International Trade shall each year lay before the House of Commons a report taking into account the priorities identified by the committee of the House of Commons that normally considers matters relating to external affairs concerning"

We are referring here to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

"(a) implementation of the Agreement in Canada;

(b) the trade obligations and commitments undertaken at the international level by the trading partners of major importance to Canada, especially the United States; and

(c) the impact of the Agreement on Canadian workers and companies".

The motion aims at simplifying and facilitating the process for those who would like to address complaints, comments or recommendations to the government. It will allow them to go to a specific body and place where they will get proper attention.

It has often been noted in the past that, when people make representations to their member of Parliament, to ministers or to senior civil servants, these officials do not follow up on the recommendations made to them.

I believe it is very important to have a place where people can make claims and complaints if, for example, their rights have been violated as regards imports, or if changes could result in problems for some industries or for employment.

We think that the responsible committee of the House of Commons could be a permanent forum which would listen to all those who have complaints, so that appropriate recommendations can be made to the minister, followed by the required adjustments.

It is very important that Canadians can have access to a standing committee of the House and that this committee be made known to the public. Indeed, those who wish to complain have to know that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade is responsible for receiving their recommendations and complaints so that we can adjust as fast as possible to major changes in the world.

In 1985, I had the privilege to sit on the committee chaired by Mr. Hnatyshyn, the current Governor General, that was reviewing the reform of Parliament and Parliamentary institutions. At that time, we asked Mr. McGrath to undertake an in-depth study on the role of Parliament. In 1985, he stated in his report: "On the eve of international free trade in the economic arena, Canada must have the parliamentary structures needed to become increasingly competitive at the national and international level".

• (1115)

Parliamentarians have been examining this issue for some time now. In 1985, Gulf Canada carried out quite a detailed study on the relationship between Parliament and big corporations as well as the population as a whole. I have made copies of the Gulf Canada report, but among other things, business people stressed the need to know their MPs well. So, businesses and groups tell their representatives that it is rather important that they maintain a good relationship with the members of Parliament who represent them.

People approach their MPs, but often the poor guy does not even know how to reach the right person to ensure that things are progressing well. This is a very unstructured way of doing things, which prevents us, first, from understanding our constitu-