

Textile and Clothing Board Act

● (9:00 p.m.)

We heard from the hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman), and he seemed to contradict the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. Burton). I know all hon. members speak independently; nevertheless, when a member speaks on behalf of his party, that should mean something. The hon. member for Waterloo said, as reported at page 5329 of *Hansard* for February 10, 1969:

This is very important. But on occasion some of our major industries that are large employers of labour are seriously jeopardized, and I can foresee the necessity for the government to take immediate action.

How can you take immediate action if there is not the legislation which will permit you to do so? He went on to say:

When such an occasion arises is not the time to start thinking about legislation. The legislation should be in existence and ready for implementation. Therefore we would like to see such blanket powers included in this bill.

Either they were joking or they meant it. I thought they meant it.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, would the minister permit a question? Does he not realize, as is quite obvious from what was read, that hon. members were referring to the use of this legislation with regard to textiles and clothing. That is what they had in mind. The minister knows that and he cannot deceive us in that way. Will the minister not agree with me when I put that proposition to him?

Mr. Pepin: Mr. Speaker, I understand the point raised by the hon. member and I am not without sympathy. I said a moment ago that this has been done in the past and, I suggest, it will be done in the future. The hon. member stands on legalistic virginity. That is his right. But I live here, in the world and in Canada in 1971 and I must try to cope with the instruments at hand. The hon. member will see the quotations that I have read into the record; he will read them tomorrow. The quotations are there and they show that hon. members on the opposition side have requested us to open up this legislation with regard to control on disruptive imports.

An hon. Member: No.

Mr. Pepin: I submit that they have clearly said that, and the record will demonstrate it.

Mr. Baldwin: They were only dealing with the clothing and textile industry.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. Burton) seeking the floor to ask a question?

Mr. Burton: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister if he listened to my remarks.

Mr. Pepin: I did.

Mr. Burton: If he listened, he would know very well that I indicated that those powers might very well be necessary. I simply entered a word of caution about their

[Mr. Pepin.]

use. My words in no way contradicted what was put forward by the hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman).

Mr. Pepin: I am pleased to receive that caution, although there is a limit as to how other hon. members may repeat what we heard earlier. Some hon. members are repeating the speeches they made this afternoon, cautioning the government against protectionism. However, I was very impressed when they told us a few months ago, on another occasion, not to be as cautious as we have been in the past. That was the point I was trying to raise and I think it is well to recall today what was said at that time.

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak for a moment or two—

An hon. Member: Or three or four.

Mr. Horner: —on the amendments proposed by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) which seek to amend clause 26 and delete clause 27. If one examines clauses 26 and 27 one can readily understand why the title of the bill, "An act to establish the Textile and Clothing Board and to make certain amendments to other acts in consequence thereof", takes on a very potent meaning. When I spoke on the bill this afternoon I commented on some remarks of the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary (Mr. Howard) before the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs which dealt with this whole matter. In committee proceedings No. 15, at page 5 the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce used words which are very important because they pertain to the broad aspect of the amendments in clauses 26 and 27.

Speaking about the bill, he said that it heralds a marked change in Canada's assistance to manufacturing industry.

I will be the first to admit that I did not quote him verbatim this afternoon; I recalled what he said from memory. If one checks *Hansard* for this afternoon and compares it with what I have said this evening, one will readily see that clauses 26 and 27 broaden the scope of a textile and clothing board. The hon. member for Okanagan Boundary said that this measure marks a change in Canada's assistance to manufacturing industry and it heralds a marked change. To me, this means that this measure constitutes a marked change toward protectionism, a concept that has long plagued the Liberal party.

Ever since the 1911 election the Liberal party has advocated free trade. In the provinces of western Canada particularly, they have repeatedly said that their party stands for free trade. That is why the amendments put forward by the hon. member for Peace River are very important. Clause 26 refers to "any goods" and clause 27 provides that any goods may be protected if that protection is justified. It is ironic that the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary, who comes from the apple industry area of British Columbia which long has lacked protection, should attempt to pilot this legislation through the committee and the House. It is ironic because the bill and