

*Customs Tariff*

That any enactment founded upon subparagraph 1(2) of this motion shall be deemed to have come into force on the 1st day of July 1978, and to have applied to all goods mentioned in the said paragraph imported or taken out of warehouse for consumption on or after that day, and to have applied to goods previously imported for which no entry for consumption was made before that day.

The next paragraph refers to changes based upon subparagraph 1(1) and paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the ways and means motion which came into force on April 11, and it states that they will be deemed to have applied to all goods mentioned in the particular paragraphs, imported or taken out of the warehouse for consumption on or after that date. In other words, unlike income tax, the changes in the customs tariff must be passed by parliament for them to have effect. They would not have had any effect on July 1 had the Prime Minister called an election, as he had indicated he was going to do.

● (1532)

We get some rather knowing smiles from hon. members opposite, but we know that they are now behaving entirely from hindsight. Many of them, depending on what part of the country they come from, were really wanting an election, and others were pushing away an election with a ten foot pole. However, that is one of the effects, and it may have been a factor when the Prime Minister decided to put the election off until some indefinite date in the future.

The finance minister's thoughts are the same as mine in this connection, that in so far as the custom tariff is concerned there has to be enactment into law before the provisions can be effective. Therefore, unless all of these provisions were to go down the drain, the proposals made by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) in his budget, which was designed to stimulate Canadian industry, would be all for naught.

The debate on second reading of this bill will range far and wide because schedule A contains every particular item that is subject to customs tariff and therefore each and every one is open to discussion. I know that many of my colleagues are going to comment upon some of the items referred to in this bill. They will comment favourably on a number of them, but many are going to say that action should have been taken of a different nature with respect to the other items. There are certain proposals that they would have liked because of their regional interests.

The total of the changes in the customs tariff are subject to the over-all influence of the GATT negotiations now going on in Geneva under the heading of the Tokyo Round. Naturally, at the moment certain areas are off limits because they are the subject matter of these negotiations.

There have been many debates in this House with regard to the secrecy of the negotiations in Geneva and the fact that the government has not taken the provinces and industry into its confidence. We had a recent visit from Mr. Warren and Mr. Grey, the chief negotiators, and they have been doing some explaining, but it is rather late in the day.

Our form of proceeding under these tariff negotiations is totally wrong. We should be much more open with the people of Canada. It is as though it were the government versus the

rest of Canada, and that Canadians are lucky peasants to have whatever it is decided should be imposed upon them. To me this is fundamentally wrong. As an example, when it comes to the petrochemical industry, surely the government of my own province of Alberta has a clear interest and a right to participate in the negotiations, not merely, "it is the view of Canada or the negotiators that such and such should take place." It is the same with Saskatchewan and its potash industry, Ontario with regard to chemicals and steel, some provinces with regard to textiles and shoes, and so on.

The situation with regard to textiles is very strange because in some parts of Canada the industry is in very dire straits at the present time, and in other parts it is not so. I recently visited a friend of mine who runs a textile converting plant and who is adding to his premises and to his work force. To his work force alone he is not just adding one, two or three people, but hundreds. He says, "Oh yes, I know that there is tough competition from abroad and that our goods are higher priced than those of our competitors, whether they are domestic or foreign, but I am increasing my production because of the quality of workmanship and design, and the public is prepared to pay for that all the time."

The provinces and industry, as I and my friends have continuously pointed out, should have an overt role in the negotiations and know ahead of time what the government is thinking in its instructions to its negotiators. The United States does not conduct its negotiations in absolute secrecy; its producers are informed of what is ahead of them and what the government is thinking. I am sure that some of my colleagues will expound at greater length on this. Perhaps one could invite my colleague from York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), who has had a good deal to say about this in the past, to do so.

I would like to draw to the minister's attention, since it obviously comes under the authority of the Minister of National Revenue and the Customs Tariff Act—and here I distinguish between the Customs Tariff Act and the Customs Act—section 17(1) of the Anti-Dumping Act with regard to varying the rate of duty after the anti-dumping tribunal has come to a final decision, which is classified as irrevocable. It states:

The deputy minister, upon receipt of an order . . . and subject to subsection 18(4) and subsection 19(1), such decision is final and conclusive.

There was a recent decision by the anti-dumping tribunal with respect to certain steel shapes that were being imported into the country, and frankly it was to protect Algoma Steel. They had complained that there was dumping in certain parts of the country from various sources and, following representations from the west coast and Alberta, the Minister of National Revenue gave relief against some of the additional duties imposed by the anti-dumping tribunal. The point at issue is that it was not in the findings of the anti-dumping tribunal that there was dumping.

● (1542)

I would like to know what power the Minister of National Revenue has to relieve against something where the decision is said to be final and conclusive. There has been some discussion