

Government Orders

I urge my colleagues of all political parties to support this amendment which meets the expectations of the Canadian steel industry, and of thousands of workers in steel mills in Quebec and throughout the country.

It is imperative that Parliament pass this amendment that does not take anything from the bill, nor detract from its substance and its importance. It will in fact make it more specific and give it more teeth for the sake not only of the steel industry, but also of many other industries in the Canadian economy.

• (1620)

I know those issues are a matter of deep concern to our colleague for Hamilton East, who is also Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment. She was with us yesterday, when we met with the Minister for International Trade, members of the steel caucus, and spokesmen for the Canadian steel industry and unions in that industry. She seemed quite anxious that Parliament consider the amendment suggested by the Canadian steel industry.

I hope the wisdom of the Deputy Prime Minister prevailed in discussions with her colleagues and that they will deem it useful and relevant to pass this amendment that is critical if Canadian industries, including the steel industry, are to compete successfully with our major trading partners and competitors, especially the United States.

[English]

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will make a very short intervention in this regard.

For those members of the Chamber who were away on business or whatever this morning, or for those who are tuning in on their television sets to this debate for the first time this afternoon, I simply want to remind the House that earlier today the member for Regina—Lumsden on behalf of the New Democratic Party put on record the concerns of the Saskatchewan steel industry. I believe he quite nicely brought together the views of our caucus on behalf of the Saskatchewan steel industry and the steel industry in general with regard to the motion before us.

I also want to respond to comments the parliamentary secretary made on the last motion dealing with child poverty and the exploitation of child labour. I can state his words fairly closely. He said that the government was not prepared to take unilateral action in this regard.

I remind the parliamentary secretary that the government is already taking unilateral action with regard to the WTO and agreements reflecting on the GATT. The parliamentary secretary should recognize that as a government it seems prepared to take unilateral action to penalize western grain farmers but is not prepared to take unilateral action to protect children. I think that is just shameful.

Mr. Mac Harb (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my friend in the NDP has a tendency to bend the statement I made a bit. I said that the government was taking action and that the minister responsible for human resources was taking action on the whole question of child poverty.

I said that we could not change the game halfway through. I suggested that the issue was not agreed to in Marrakech. What we signed did not include that issue. A future agreement or a future debate might take place around the issue. I think the hon. member would suggest that it would be unwise for us to take a unilateral action as a country and add a new amendment to our legislation; but for him to say that we are not concerned about child poverty is not fair and not warranted.

I go back to some of the comments made concerning the whole notion of dumping and anti-dumping. The new disciplines on the treatment of dumped goods will not impair the Canadian ability to respond to exporters that dump goods into the Canadian market when such dumping threatens or causes injury to Canadian industry. The new discipline should however reduce the scope for the harassment of Canadian export interests resulting from unfair dumping duty actions by our trading partners.

• (1625)

I also add that our existing dumping action will be continued under the new system as if it had been made under that system. Any continuation of an injury finding will be made in accordance with the new anti-dumping agreement. It is not expected to put an increased burden on Canadian authorities. They already operate in a system which for the most part conforms to the new rules.

There was a reference to the American legislation. I assure the House and Canadians that we are examining, have examined in the past and will continue to examine all moves and changes or proposed changes to the American legislation in terms of language or statement to ensure that they are consistent with the NAFTA as well as with the World Trade Organization agreement.

Should Canadian interests be harmed for whatever reason by any provisions which are inconsistent with our right under the international trade agreement we will take appropriate action. Two wrongs do not make a right. If somebody has gone beyond the agreement in introducing changes to our laws and regulations to divert from the agreement does not mean that we should be doing the same. As a government and as a society we have to fulfil our commitment under the World Trade Organization agreement.