

Textile and Clothing Board Act

Style Wins World Fashion Sales". He is a Tory, but since the story is a good one I will quote it. It reads in part as follows:

• (3:50 p.m.)

Showing New York, London, Los Angeles, Paris, Frankfurt what's up in high fashion?

Believe it.

For that's what it says in *Women's Wear Daily*, the bible of the women's fashion industry.

The other day, out of Frankfurt, West Germany, WWD carried this dispatch from its European correspondent:

"Twelve Canadian textile mills (10 in Quebec, one each in Ontario and British Columbia) garnered immediate sales of \$3.16 million and potential for \$13 million more at their first combined exhibit at the German trade fair for clothing textiles here.

The article continues:

But isn't the Canadian textile industry supposed to be in deep trouble, and what's it doing competing successfully against world competition at a Frankfurt trade fair?

Very nicely, thank you, says Industry, Trade and Commerce Minister Jean-Luc Pepin.

And not just in Frankfurt.

Then the article continues:

But in New York, Philadelphia, Dallas, London and a lot of other places.

Not just with textiles, either, but with sportswear, knitwear, furs, costume jewellery, rainwear, coats, dresses, leathers, and suedes, gowns, hosiery, suits, slacks, hats, shoes. The whole head to toe works in the world of fashion and fabric, male and female, and children too.

The article goes on in the same fashion but I will bypass that for the moment. I quote from *Le Devoir* of January 21, 1971 as follows:

[Translation]

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce attempted yesterday, in a speech before the Canadian Association of Importers, to explain the solutions selected by the government in the field of Canadian trade policy, on the basis of the principle that a balance should exist between advantages and drawbacks.

With regard to the textile and clothing industry, Mr. Pepin explained that the bill tabled in the House last week and providing for the establishment of a Textile and Clothing Board is unique in the whole commercial community of the free world. He added, as was reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, that this action might well be taken as an example by others with a view to improving the global situation of the world textile trade.

This Board composed of three members was established early in December and a bill to sanction its legal existence is now before the House.

Moreover, the minister expects that by 1975, Canadian footwear exports will have more than doubled, from \$30 million in 1970 to \$70 million.

Let us point out that the Canadian footwear industry, like the textile and clothing industry, is facing a very strong competition from Asian countries—mainly Japan and Hong Kong—where production costs are lower.

As far as privileged financing is concerned, the government is ready to implement all the anticipated and authorized means under its international commitments in order to reduce imports financed by foreign governments when they seem to hurt the Canadian industry.

I should like—

[Mr. Guay (St. Boniface).]

[English]

The Canadian clothing industry is, therefore, one of which we can be justly proud. The industry is characterized generally by an important number of smaller firms, 60 to 70 employees on the average. This characteristic enables individual firms to be flexible and adaptable, two features which are extremely important in a business subject to the whims of style and fashion. At the same time, however, the smaller size constitutes a drawback for most firms because it bars them from having ready access to the capital market. Being in a highly competitive business, the companies do not usually generate sufficient funds to finance needed expansion.

This is especially true of the garment industry in western Canada, and in Winnipeg particularly. There the companies are in a state of transition. From manufacturers of basic items—the utility type of clothing—they have evolved into highly fashionable items produced for sale throughout Canada and the United States. These companies are in a difficult period of transition; their demands for capital are rising, profits are meagre and they find themselves in a very vulnerable situation.

In contrast to these difficulties, the long-term prospects of the industry are much brighter. Given the projections of continued growth in the Canadian standard of living, it is reasonable to expect that Canadians will allocate a larger share of their income to purchasing clothes. With regard to exports, where the main considerations appear to be price, style and quality, our exporters have already made quite a remarkable impression. Between 1964 and 1969, the last year for which complete statistics are available, Canadian clothing exports grew from \$17,248,000 to \$58,321,000, an increase of 238 per cent. This is, therefore, an industry not to be neglected and I believe it is important that it be given every opportunity to further improve and increase its competitiveness.

Since the development of its textile policy, the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce has greatly assisted Canadian clothing manufacturers through its trade fairs and missions program, productivity centres, the Fashion Canada promotional program and the modification of the general adjustment assistance program to make it more readily accessible to this industry.

As the minister mentioned yesterday and today, Bill C-215 is but another element of the government's textile policy. He should be highly complimented for this approach. Quite apart from specific aspects of the bill, the creation of a textile and clothing board, amendments to the Export and Import Permits Act and the Customs Act which give the government the necessary tools to implement its new policy, the bill has a special significance in and support for the textile and clothing industries of Canada. This, in turn, is most important to Canadian manufacturers and should encourage them to take the necessary steps to expand and take advantage of the market opportunities available in Canada and abroad.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being four o'clock p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business, namely, public bills, notices of motions and private bills.