

Customs Tariff (No. 2)

seek an interview with me, and the hon. member would have insisted on that, I would have seen them. I and my people are still willing to see them. If an American company sets up an investment based on a one year temporary reduction, it would be a pretty short cash flow on which to base an investment in this country.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Chairman, I just sat back as a fisherman waiting for the trout to rise to the fly. I have before me a copy of the letter outlining the precise argument I have made in much more detail. It is dated February 21, two days after the budget, and is addressed to the minister. The minister said people affected by budgetary proposals would consult with him. What happened to the answer to this letter that was written less than 48 hours after the delivery of the budget? Will the minister tell me privately or publicly what was his answer to the letter from Gilson Brothers of Mississauga, Ontario, in this regard? I have a copy of that letter. It is purely objective.

The hon. member for Don Valley read representations from a number of concerns in which they complained to the minister about certain of these proposals *seriatim*.

To refute the minister's statement, may I say that this question of consultation would be something new. I am not going to be the one to say they are liars or mistaken. With regard to certain budgetary proposals and customs in the past they have had the courtesy of the department of some consultative process in order to work matters out. The minister admitted there was a departure this time, that changes were made without consulting on a limited basis, and the government were going to get a feedback from the concerns involved. We now have it. From assessing the results, I am not very impressed with the degree of consultation, bearing in mind the minister's statement with regard to the thrust of the budget, which was the stimulation of the Canadian economy.

Does the letter from which the hon. member for Don Valley read, and which I now intervene to support, talk about economy support? Does it talk about the importation of rice into Canada where the net benefit will be something like 1½ cents a year per capita? What do all of these things add up to? It is up to the minister to discharge the burden of his budget.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for Edmonton West mentioned Gilson Brothers of Mississauga. We received a complaint from another concern in Ontario with regard to the duty reduction on power lawn mowers on the grounds he has recited, namely that they had difficulty competing against American manufacturers. We also received a complaint from the Canadian Outdoor Equipment Company of Toronto and an individual in Peterborough. Both Gilson and the other company expressed themselves in favour of the duty reductions on engines and other parts for lawn mowers; that is to say, items 42420-1 and 42525-1. At this stage I can merely give an undertaking to the hon. member for Edmonton West—

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): On the three items.

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): —to resurrect the correspondence and give him a personal report on the follow-through. I admit the burden of proof is on me.

Mr. Whittaker: Mr. Chairman, I wish to ask the minister about one of the duty areas of the tariff structure. Guthion can come into Canada duty free in three pound bags, but in 2½ pound bags, under tariff item 93811-2, there is a 7½ per cent duty. This is put up in 2½ pound bags because this is the quantity that is used. It is the only way it is packaged in the United States, yet it cannot come in duty free.

I recognize that this is not under this item, but I would like to take this opportunity to refer to a letter I received today. The reply from the Department of National Revenue was that the provisions in the Customs Tariff Act are statutory. They were introduced by parliament and consequently they are required to be administered accordingly.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Perhaps the hon. member will give me a photostat of that letter.

Mr. Whittaker: I will give you the letter.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Send me a copy and I will have my officials look into it.

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Chairman, I wish to come back to the point raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West. I listened to the exchange between the hon. member and the minister on the subject of lawn mower parts and I wish to pose a question to the hon. member for Edmonton West or the minister. This great patriotic distributor which markets across Canada under its house name because of some fractional price differential, if I understood the hon. member correctly, switched its account from a Canadian to an American manufacturer. This is very interesting and very relevant to the item under discussion inasmuch as the result of that action, if I heard the hon. member for Edmonton West correctly, was the loss of a certain number of Canadian jobs. Possibly the minister can enlighten us on this aspect of the topic that was under the discussion between him and the hon. member for Edmonton West.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): The hon. member is making my case. I could not put it much better than that.

• (2150)

Mr. Barnett: When we get into a discussion of this kind in the committee stage perhaps it is the occasion to start naming names. There are only a certain number of distributors who manufacture under house names in Canada and presumably they are Canadian firms. When a situation of this kind is brought to the floor in committee, the Canadian people are entitled to know who is responsible for the cancellation of plans for the expansion of that particular Canadian manufacturing enterprise.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I believe the hon. member for Edmonton West was good enough to say who made the representation. He has already revealed that information.