

Supply—Industry

important Quebec communities depend on that industry. In the riding of Sherbrooke, which I represent in the house, there are 12 textile industries which ensure the livelihood of 40 per cent of the workers, men and women.

That important industry is experiencing increasing unrest and is going through a critical situation, despite the favourable balance-sheets of some concerns. For instance, the Dominion Textile Company has a spinning-mill in Sherbrooke, another one in Magog and a third one in Montmorency; for the past ten years, its financial statements have shown surpluses and, if I remember well, from 1954 to 1964, its profits amounted to \$120 million.

Does that mean that the textile industry is flourishing? Far from it, Mr. Chairman. When one considers the situation, one finds that industrialists had to show renewed ingenuity to face up to foreign competition. They had to renew their equipment and adapt it for increased production to compete with foreign products. But all that was done at the expense of the working class, and here is why. In the spinning-mills or factories, the weavers have to work in abnormal and inhuman conditions. It has been established, for instance, that the working pace has to be based on the marching time of the British army, which is three miles an hour, to get 100 per cent productivity. In the textile plants in Sherbrooke and elsewhere, at the present time, workers must work at a rate of 125 per cent to get a decent salary of \$65 a week—which is not unreasonable. They must run like rabbits, looking after 110, 115 or 120 spinning frames from morning until night, and most of the time they have only five or ten minutes to take a bite at lunch hour. Unlike everybody else, they do not have half an hour or an hour for lunch. That is the situation in the Canadian textile industry.

It is very well to say that our Industry Department is thinking of attracting new industries. That is fine. It is a good thing—and such a stand must be encouraged—for the department, in co-operation with other departments, to consider, as is often rightly mentioned by the hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette), using our raw materials on the spot and processing them in the first stage here, in Canada, particularly to help our production and industrialization and the marketing of our finished products abroad. That is an excellent undertaking but the government should make every effort so

[Mr. Allard.]

that we keep our present industries and that they are not put in a situation which would force them to disappear.

The textile industry is a Canadian industry. This afternoon some hon. members referred to American investments, to foreign investments, saying that our industrial problems are often dependant upon other governments or foreign businessmen.

Well, Canadian capital invested in the textile industry represents about 80 per cent. Therefore, it is very important, Mr. Chairman, that the government make every effort to safeguard and improve the textile situation in Canada, especially in the province of Quebec. Solutions would be numerous. Of course, there is the colossal matter of foreign imports. We get too many foreign textile products. I have asked questions in the house in that respect, but I did not get any answer. I raise the question once again this afternoon.

We are told that those Canadian textile industrialists have opened foreign branches, either in Hong Kong or in Japan, with the profits they made in Canada sweating our labour class, which is forced to work in inhuman conditions. Those industrialists invested those funds in Hong Kong, in Japan or elsewhere, to set up factories, where production costs are much lower, and where Chinese or Japanese people work for 20 cents or 15 cents per hour. Those Canadian industrialists produce textile overseas and import it into Canada, into their own domestic market, thus hurting the Canadian production and slowing down employment within our own industries. Is that correct? In my opinion, it is important that the Department of Industry and the government take an interest in that aspect of the question and lay down standards to prevent Canadian industrialists who wish to invest overseas from using profits made here to import those foreign products, thus harming the Canadian production and the Canadian workers. I think the government should take this question into consideration in order to find out the truth about the facts that were reported to us, and lay down import standards in order to afford greater protection to the Canadian industry.

In fact, Canadian industrialists are still those who make most profits, thanks to very low production costs in Japan; they suffer no inconvenience from this situation; their fortune is ever increasing; they can travel throughout the world and live in luxury.

● (3:20 p.m.)

But the Canadian worker and the Canadian consumer must suffer on account of this