

Cases have arisen in the past where exporting countries which made commitments to restrain exports of a certain nature to certain quantities were unable to do so because they found they did not have the means with which to accomplish this objective. So if the policy is to be enforced at all it will have to be enforced by this government in Canada, and the Customs Act is the means by which these objectives can be brought about.

I mentioned earlier that the new policy envisages continued reliance on negotiated restraints as the principal means of protection against disruptive imports. We do not need to change from that policy, but it has to be effectively enforced. That is the reason for including this clause in the bill, to ensure that if necessary, and when necessary, it is possible to invoke the Customs Act in order that voluntary restraints may be effected. Many countries are not too happy about voluntary restraints, but they accept them and are happy to have our assistance in enforcing them. In fact, there have been instances where such countries have come to us and asked us to invoke the powers we have under the Customs Act. That is all I shall say on the clause that is before the House. I believe the minister wants to make some additional comments in regard to the question raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert).

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): The hon. member is wondering whether, in the case of action taken by the government by order in council published in the Canada Gazette, as my Parliamentary Secretary has just explained, the government would be obliged as in the case of a surtax, to ask the House for agreement to take or extend such action. The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

But, as explained by my Parliamentary Secretary, it is clear that clause 27 will be applied only after consultation with the country which has agreed to voluntarily restraints of its exports, after full exploration of all possible and available means to have the voluntary agreement enforced by that country itself.

I would like to emphasize that it would be rather dishonest on the part of the government of Canada to allow a country which has accepted to limit its exports to violate its own agreements and to export more than its quotas to Canada while other countries which have accepted voluntary restraints would respect their commitments.

I think it is good policy not to make any exception for those that do not accept to fulfill their commitments or cannot do so. Therefore, I do not see why, to reply to the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), the government should come back to the House to seek authority to do what is, after all, quite normal and desirable.

[English]

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): I want to speak on this clause for only a couple of minutes, Mr. Speaker. I really want to deal with some of the implications, as I see them, of the last two clauses and the amendments thereto

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which we have been discussing. Before doing so I would like to note that it would considerably facilitate discussion of these bills, whether in the House or in committee, if relevant references were included in bills' explanatory notes. There is an increasing tendency by the government to omit explanatory notes completely. It seems to me perfectly reasonable that when an amendment refers to another section of an act now in force, it should be included in the explanatory notes.

It would seem that there are serious implications in the provisions of clauses 26 and 27. It would appear that through these clauses the government is arming itself with extra weapons with which to carry on its trading relationships throughout the world. Perhaps these powers are needed by the government. There are indications that from time to time they will be needed in carrying on our trading relations. At the same time, I am sure it would be acknowledged by the government that they are restrictive in nature and, as such, carry ominous portents in terms of what may be coming in our trading relations. I only hope that the passage of clauses such as these will not contribute to a trend toward restrictive trading practices throughout the world.

We have some serious problems in our trading relations, but I hope everything possible will be done to prevent clauses such as these being interpreted in a way which would indicate that Canada may be contributing to a more restrictive and protective pattern of trading practices throughout the world. As I said, the powers which are contained in these clauses may indeed be needed by the government in dealing with certain situations. Their wording is quite clear. Nevertheless, a word of caution should be sounded that this is not the type of trend we want to see in our trading relations. It would be contrary to Canada's interests if it were found necessary to proceed in this direction.

Mr. Pepin: On this point, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister has already spoken and can reply to the hon. member only with the consent of the House. Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Pepin: This will take just one minute. First of all, there is an explanatory note in the original version of the bill which was used in the committee study. Secondly, I have listened to hon. members on the opposite side cautioning me against protectionism and, since I have the memory of an elephant, I can remember some of the things that were said on the subject of the use of the Export and Import Permits Act. As recorded at page 5320 of *Hansard* for February 10, 1969, the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Harkness) said:

Speaking for this party I would say we are not only in favour of this legislation—

That is the Export and Import Permits Act

—being renewed but that we are strongly in favour of it being used more effectively than has been the case in the past several years.