

Customs Tariff

well as the quo. In this case we had a situation which followed the desire of the government to make certain changes in rates that had already been bound and the whole story is there in the resolution.

Mr. Benidickson: Mr. Chairman, I am concerned about this problem. I have admitted my ignorance about some of these procedures because they largely involve trade and commerce. The minister may correct me if I am wrong in my understanding, but what is the situation when Canada decides that it would like to approach its principal supplier of fruits and vegetables, shall we say, which would be the United States? Some items at least are under GATT. Am I right in thinking that before the United States comes to grips in negotiations with Canada, under its tariff board procedures public notice is given of the fact that it has been approached by Canada which desires to increase its tariffs with respect to these products. Is that correct?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Yes, that is correct. The law of the United States requires public notice to be given.

Mr. Benidickson: We have not that provision here, I realize.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Benidickson: The difficult thing, of course, is that the government is very secretive about its intentions to request adjustments with respect to these agreements. They approach a foreign government such as the United States and the United States, under its law, publicizes the fact of the approach. People who might be affected are given an opportunity to come before a certain governmental body down there to express their views. Here the minister says we are not entitled even to know he has gone forward to ask for some of these changes. This makes it very awkward, indeed, I think, in public discussions in the House of Commons.

Mr. Pickersgill: Before the item carries, would the minister tell us whether this was one of the items affected by the GATT discussions?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No, Mr. Chairman. I have indicated them already. There are only three items out of I think about 75 items in resolution 8 which entered into the negotiations under GATT. They were 438d; 504a and 505.

Mr. Benidickson: They are the only ones in this group involved in GATT negotiations?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): That were involved in negotiations that have been concluded.

Mr. Benidickson: That is past negotiations?

[Mr. Fleming (Eglinton).]

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Yes.

Mr. Benidickson: It is quite understandable that if the minister is negotiating in the future with respect to some other quid pro quo, we would not have this before us at the time.

Item agreed to.

Items 90f; 99e agreed to.

Customs Tariff—115b. Smelt, fresh, for processing in Canadian plants per pound: British preferential tariff, free; most-favoured-nation tariff, free; general tariff, 1 ct.

Mr. Pickersgill: I should like to ask the minister just what is the origin of this change, and who requested it?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): The change in item 115b was requested by the fisheries council of Canada. This is a new item to assist Canadian smelt processors who must occasionally import smelt when smelt is not available in Canadian waters. Most of the smelt which is processed in Canada is exported. It is my understanding that no Canadian fishermen will be adversely affected by this reduction. The annual imports are estimated at \$50,000.

Item agreed to.

Customs Tariff—125. Oysters, shelled; cans containing shelled oysters: British preferential tariff, free; most-favoured-nation tariff, free; general tariff, 25 per cent.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if we could have an explanation of this one?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): The change here applies to the words, "cans containing shelled oysters".

Mr. Pickersgill: What was the rate before?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It was always free before. My hon. friend will see on the right-hand side the reference to the prior rate. The words "cans containing shelled oysters", have been added to this item.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is my point, what was the rate on cans containing shelled oysters?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It is on the right-hand side; they were always free.

Item agreed to.

Customs Tariff—128. Lobsters or lobster meat, fresh or boiled: British preferential tariff, free; most-favoured-nation tariff, free; general tariff, 25 per cent.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if we could have an explanation of this item, as I am interested in it.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): The change in item 128 was requested by the fisheries council. The tariff on boiled lobster was removed and