

Customs Tariff

Mr. Speaker, I agree that Canada should trade with other countries. That is quite normal. We should be allowed to export to other countries products which they cannot produce themselves, but in return they should be able to sell us those products which we are not in a position to produce domestically. I agree with the establishment of tariffs to control trade. But care should be taken that trade is done on a fraternal basis and not in a spirit of competition which could create hatred between people instead of bringing them together. Mr. Speaker, parliament should not allow trading for the sole purpose of bringing profits to those who have the advantage of holding a commercial monopoly. We had that situation before when we found it most difficult here in Canada to secure markets for our beef or pork while at the same time we opened the doors to pork or beef imports directly competing with the production capacity of our Canadian producers. Of course some improvements have been made in that respect and I am pleased to say here in the House that very efficient measures have been taken and have improved conditions in that field. Canadian producers are right to be proud of them.

● (2112)

Mr. Speaker, we also have in Canada the textile and clothing industry and there are several industries of that type in my riding which provide a living for hundreds of families. The textile and clothing industry has been facing many difficulties in the last few years. There have been massive lay-offs due to unduly high imports under the pretext that a shirt from Taiwan costs \$4.50 when a similar shirt sells for \$9 in Canada. But the cost value of a product is not everything, we should also compare quality and consider that even if we pay less for imports, if we have thousands of idle workers living on unemployment or welfare allowances, it has an effect on the tax level and ultimately consumers have to pay a price equivalent to that of the Canadian product while they create unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, I accept and recognize that the recent GATT agreements have brought some improvements in that field. I asked that question not so long ago of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner) and he gave us very interesting statistics on the behaviour of the textile and clothing industry. But we should be careful and very vigilant because as soon as you relax there is always someone ready to take advantage of the situation. This is why I urged the government to be very careful in its negotiations with the various countries of the world.

Mr. Speaker, as concerns food products we import 40 to 50 million pounds of different types of cheese when we could encourage our own dairy industry to find the means to produce other types of cheese which would place our dairy producers in a better position. Mr. Speaker, a great many young farmers and young dairy producers who believe in agriculture and in the future of our dairy industry have committed themselves financially. They have incurred financial obligations geared to

their production capacity but one day their quota has been reduced without any consideration for their financial obligations towards the Canadian Farm Credit Corporation, other farm credit offices, banks, caisses populaires or other financial institutions.

Having the volume of production which is necessary to meet their obligations these young farmers are unable to market their production; their obligations remain at the same level but their production quota is reduced. So they cannot make enough profit to meet their obligations. We now have many young farmers who become discouraged and simply leave their operations; they go bankrupt precisely because of a lack of foresight on our part as far as the import of dairy products is concerned. We are not vigilant enough, we should make more efforts to have our dairy production transformed into all kinds of products to enable this industry to thrive and thus ensure the survival of our agriculture, of our dairy industry all over Canada.

Mr. Speaker, another sector which has suffered directly from our lack of foresight is that of farming implements. You remember that a few years ago a commission was created by the Government of Canada to inquire into spare parts for farm machinery, namely the Barber commission. That commission did a terrific job. It reported to the government, to the House, but most of its recommendations have been pigeon-holed. And, today, parts for farming equipment have reached a price level that makes absolutely no sense, that is way beyond the capacity to pay of most Canadian farmers who have to buy them to keep their machines operating properly. There again, when dealing with other countries, the government should pay special attention to farm equipment parts so that their prices can be more in line with the purchasing power of their users. Mr. Speaker, I am not blaming those people, or businesses who must keep huge inventories of spare parts for farm machinery. They, and their industries, are subjected to trading conditions that escape their control. Obviously, if they buy a part that costs them \$20, they cannot sell it for \$19. But, Mr. Speaker, that is where the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Horner) is failing us. When he sat on this side, with the Progressive Conservatives, he spoke the way I do today; he seems to have changed his mind since he has gone over to the government side. Tonight, I make a special appeal to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce: let his administration, let him, have the same attitude that he displayed when he was simply an hon. member of the Progressive Conservatives, of the opposition. Mr. Speaker, I do not think I am insulting the minister by reminding him of his attitudes and words. I think it is logical, as we are studying this bill, to emphasize that the people who are responsible for signing agreements with other countries, should always regard the interests of Canadian producers of primary products as their first priority. Mr. Speaker, Bill C-48, now before the House, does not seem like an extraordinary bill but still its contents will have consid-