

stop serving Thunder Bay, the Government would have to vote with them even though it owned 55 per cent of the shares.

I realize that my time has run out. Let me conclude by saying that it is a bad deal, and there is no way that I can support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): It being two o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

● (1400)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—BILLS

[English]

EXPORT AND IMPORT PERMITS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina) moved that Bill C-243, an Act to amend the Export and Import Permits Act (apparel industry), be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, it gives me unusual pleasure to have an opportunity to speak in moving this Bill because it has been the product of a great deal of study and consideration by the men and women who are most concerned with the garment industry of Canada. I am referring to the companies, to the members of the Canadian Apparel Manufacturers Institute who support this Bill, and to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union which represents some tens of thousands of workers in Ontario, some tens of thousands of workers in Quebec, and some tens of thousands of workers in other parts of Canada. Obviously as unions and company employers there are things they sometimes find to disagree about, but on this proposal they agree because they want to defend the existence of the garment manufacturing or apparel manufacturing industry in Canada. It is a proposal which they have put to Parliament. They have sent copies of the proposal to all Members. I hope it will be considered worth while by all here today to vote at the end of this hour to have the Bill referred to committee for further study.

Both the manufacturers and the unions, while they are supporters of this Bill, have pointed out to me that there are some details which need amendment and that they very much wish to come to speak to the appropriate committee of Parliament about this Bill when it is referred.

The purpose of the Bill is, in effect, to regulate the imports of garments, of apparel, into Canada. That is reflected in the explanatory note which says:

Recognizing that measures to protect the apparel industry will benefit Canada, the purpose of this Bill is to impose quotas on imported apparel to encourage investment by Canadians and non-Canadians that would contribute to economic growth and employment opportunities in Canada.

Export and Import Permits Act

In other words, this is to strengthen investment and modernization in the apparel manufacturing industry of Canada. Unless we are going to change the climate in Canada for a much warmer one, I think we need to keep a clothing manufacturing industry here.

There are three main proposals as shown in Section 2 in the Bill. One is that new import permits, in excess of those already issued at a certain date to be determined in the law, would not be issued to enterprises whose sole business is importing. The new import permits would be issued to manufacturers and issued to them in proportion as they have increased their production in Canada. When I first heard this, I was puzzled. As it was explained to me, the manufacturers already find it appropriate. A shirt manufacturer may buy some shirts overseas so that he can offer to Eaton, The Bay, Sears, or whoever, a package line, a variety, more than he is able to concentrate on making in Canada. It is proposed, therefore, to establish this practice and to recognize and support it in law to give the benefit of importation to the manufacturers so long as they increase their manufacturing, their production, in Canada accordingly.

There is also a caveat in Section 3 in the Bill that this would not apply to importations from the United States or from the European Economic Community. The reason is very simple. In the past decade or so the garment industry in Canada has found it necessary to seek defence, as has the garment industry in the United States, as has the garment industry in western Europe, against the importation of garments from countries where the wages and working conditions are extremely poor. The concept of competition, even as reflected in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade does not allow unlimited injury to go without defence. In other words, when our industry is being injured as it is, the GATT agreements allow us to defend ourselves.

I have a letter from the Canadian Apparel Manufacturers Institute, dated April 20, written to me in support of this Bill. It points out that the industry employs some 113,000 people in such centres as Montreal or Winnipeg and that it is responsible for 18 per cent and 17 per cent respectively of all manufacturing in these cities. The Institute wrote:

However, we are an industry under considerable pressure from imports. Imports have captured 43 per cent of the Canadian market.

At the beginning of the 1980s imports captured only 31 per cent of the Canadian market but now they capture 43 per cent. That is what we have lost. The industry is asking that the haemorrhage be stopped. The letter continued:

At present, 90 per cent of imported clothing comes from low-cost sources and the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (under GATT). This international agreement allows the exporting countries to control Canadian quotas within their jurisdictions. The Canadian industry's share of our own market has been steadily eroded. Canadian shipments have been shrinking by an average 5 per cent and considerable employment has been lost over the last decade.

I repeat, we are speaking here of countries which pay extremely low wages, often less than one-tenth of others, and which operate under environmental and labour conditions that