

Textile and Clothing Board Act

He would say: Ah, that is very easy for you to say; have you ever tried to bring these people together? The minister would say it is not easy to bring them together. I agree.

In our Canadian society there are some very real problems involved in bringing people together, but I honestly question whether the philosophy of the minister's party is really conducive to making this kind of proposal to people in industry. I question whether a wholehearted effort has ever been made to bring people in the industry, people in the trade unions representing the workers in that industry, together to work out a framework and, if necessary, a program of incentives and perhaps even of penalties or a combination of both, in order to effect a rationalization of this industry. So, while all of us in this House really do not have any choice but to support what we see as an experiment or an attempt to deal with the problems in the industry, we will not be in a position to judge what is being done until some time has elapsed when we can see the outlines of the government's policy.

My reason for rising today to make this intervention is the speech made by the hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Ritchie), a member for whom I personally have a very high regard. I was rather surprised by the touch of bitterness in his voice when he spoke, as a western member, about protectionist policies which favour the east. He looked upon this bill as a protectionist bill which would tend to subsidize the textile industry. I do not really think anyone could come to that conclusion based on a reading of the bill. His statement, however, illustrates what has been a long and deep grievance between the western part of Canada and the central part of Canada. It is very difficult to say—and I suggest the hon. member for Dauphin consider this—whether in fact it is always the west which subsidizes the east or always the Maritimes which pays the price of central Canada's prosperity. At the moment, however, no part of the country is prosperous because of the government's policies.

• (4:10 p.m.)

There is a considerable degree of subsidization. Certainly, those of us who are from Ontario have never been, and I hope never will be, insensitive to the problems of Prairie farmers. We have never stood in the way of farm programs that would assist them when they were facing difficulties. I do not think any of us from Ontario have stood in the way of transfer payments to the Maritimes. We have supported those payments very strongly. The truth, of course, is that there does not seem to be any acceptable pattern through which the rewards in one part of the country are being shared with another part of the country. Historically from the beginning of this country, there has been this conflict between the primary producers, the provinces dependent on primary production, and the manufacturing sections of the country. Having listened to the speeches made today, we know that we are a long way from resolving this problem.

Since this problem must be resolved if we are to have an economic policy that will gain wide acceptance, the one thing that must be assured is that the benefits which accrue to any one part of Canada must be shared equally

[Mr. Saltzman.]

with the other parts of Canada. The day has long passed when one province can say, "because we have oil the major rewards from oil production must stay with us," or "because we have manufacturing, the major rewards from manufacturing must remain with us." We must develop a sharing program that is acceptable across the whole country. Until we do that, we will have the kind of recrimination that always arises whether it be over textile policies, tariff policies, or natural resource policies. If we are to have a rational, reasonable and intelligent development of industrial policy, that particular issue of sharing must be involved.

In an interview the other day the Minister of Communications (Mr. Kierans) made some scathing remarks about the effects of a pipeline through the Mackenzie valley on the manufacturing industry in central Canada, on our balance of payments, and on the Canadian dollar. But the people in Alberta and Saskatchewan may have different views. They may see the pipeline as of great assistance to their economies. They will be able to move more oil. There will be additional employment available in those provinces. But even if they agree with the minister they may say, "So what? Ontario has been living off the fat of the land; it is time we had our innings." These are understandable conflicts and we will not resolve them through this measure or in this debate.

I raise this matter because these kinds of bills are being debated out of the context of national policy, out of the context of the kind of society we want to see, out of the context of sharing between people and sharing between provinces. Until we have a clear statement of national policy from the government on what it is planning for the economy, it is difficult to see anything meaningful or important in the kind of measure that we have before us today.

[Translation]

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say a few words on the bill before the House.

We set up a commission to study the problem of the Canadian textile industry. I recognize that the problem is serious and rather complex. I should like to say how much I admire the Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) who worked untiringly in his endeavour to find solutions to the problem.

To solve the problem, he has recommended that a board be established to study the problems of production, distribution and especially exports and imports, to find out what may not be working properly.

If something is wrong in respect of imports, especially with dumping, the Board will have to prevent such abuses. However, all kinds of suggestions have been made, all kinds of statistics have been produced about textile products, but such a solution will never solve the problem.

The problem in the textile industry is the same as in any other industry, in any other segment of the economy. It is a Canadian problem as well as an international one. In the textile field as in many others, the experts should be seeking a real solution to the problem, one which