

Customs Tariff

dollar of Canadian after tax profit is too valuable to risk unless in a high capital, turnover situation.

● (2102)

Though not discounting measures such as DISC, I think a great many of our troubles started with that taxation act which turned a basically simple system into a complicated monster which has effectively removed decision-making from the private sector in Canada. We are surely paying the price for that folly today. The only way out is to start removing the tax on incentive and efficiency and begin to tax costs. That is the only way in which we shall be able to wring the waste out of the system and bring the industrial sector back into a competitive situation vis-à-vis the United States, the emerging Asian countries and our industrial colleagues in Europe.

I criticize tonight the floundering decision-making process within the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. I think it is having a tragic effect on the world of productive work in Canada. I do not believe we shall be able to turn this drift into national bankruptcy around until we put in place an industrial strategy for the medium and the long term which would be subject to continuous amendments as conditions in the world marketplace demand change. We have to stop taxing efficiency and begin giving awards to those responsible for efficiency and frugality for those who work. I see no other way in which we can produce our own capital on the scale required for capital plant and expansion, for putting in place the infrastructure needed for transportation and for the development of new frontiers of energy. All this is necessary if we are to remain an industrialized nation. It will take some basic change in the policy and thought processes of the government before any of this is likely to change for the better, allowing us to realize a more equitable distribution of our gross national product.

[Translation]

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few brief comments on Bill C-48 now under consideration. Canadians generally probably feel that Bill C-48 is far from being clear enough to enable them to discover whether their interests are adequately protected, especially as far as industry is concerned. Perhaps there is some protection at the commercial level but, in my opinion, this is not clear enough.

The bill refers of course to many tariff items with which most Canadians are not too well acquainted and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out once again to the House that those who draft the bills submitted to the House should make their contents more explicit because after all those bills are meant for Canadians. They are the ones who must live with them, comply with them, apply them in their midst and it seems to me that the more explicit and understandable they are for the entire population, the easier it will be for the government to administer them.

[Mr. Huntington.]

Mr. Speaker, I was for many years—I would not want to give away my age by saying that—secretary-treasurer of a municipality. As all other municipal secretary-treasurers in Quebec and in Canada I was called upon, at the request of the mayor and of the councillors, to draft regulations, and I always tried to make them clear so that the ratepayers could understand them and apply them more easily. I also had a hand in drafting releases to be distributed to the families of the municipality informing them of the decisions handed down by the municipal authorities in the best interest of the ratepayers. Since coming to the House of Commons, correct me if I am wrong, I have tried to follow the same principles, and at least I tried to have an input so that the laws by which Canadians have to abide be as clear as possible.

I am reminded of the hon. member for Lotbinière, Mr. Auguste Choquette, who was my opponent in the Bellechasse riding and who was not so fortunate in this race; in any event, that is not the point.

He said in this House that our statutes must never be too explicit so that lawyers can have some work to do in trying to explain them to the public. I am sure that he was joking on this occasion, but this is contained in a speech that he made in this House, as anyone can check from *Hansard*. In my opinion, the legislation we make should be much clearer, much more explicit so that the people concerned who have to live every day with laws passed by Parliament may understand clearly why the legislators included such or such a section in a bill.

I see the hon. Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer) smiling, but looking at him, I am convinced that he is thinking: "Oh Lord, how true!" For my part, I have always thought that it was much easier for a government, whether it be at the federal, provincial or municipal level, or a school board, to govern in the best interests of the population when the population understands the reasons for such or such a decision.

Mr. Speaker, I have merely glanced at Bill C-48. I cannot say that I have studied it in depth as we should normally do because we do not have enough time. In any event, I have found that it would serve the interests of the population as well as those of the government if our laws were more explicit or certain sections better explained so that the population might well understand the reasons for them and see whether they actually safeguard the interests of the individual rather than those of people who are in the import business to make profits. Mr. Speaker, what Canadian workers expect above all from Bill C-48 is that the government refuse entry into Canada of products that would compete with the capacity of Canadian industries. And I imagine the situation is the same for workers elsewhere, be they Americans, Africans or Asians. In short, workers anywhere look after their own interests and they want the industry to allow them to make a living. They do not want to see trade come in conflict with their own interests in such a way as to make them join the ranks of the unemployed.