

Canadian International Trade Tribunal Act

situation and making recommendations to government in the past.

Another serious problem that gives us cause to criticize and oppose the Bill is the matter of the discretionary power to conduct inquiries which the Textile and Clothing Board in particular has under Article 9 of the Textile and Clothing Board Act. That discretionary power is done away with in Bill C-110. In addition, the new reality is that the International Trade Tribunal will be prevented from making recommendations and reports on injury inquiries which would follow from the concerns of various industries affected by trade.

Given the particular fact that under the Act only producers who produce the majority of specified goods can petition for an injury inquiry, we feel grave concern for the small producers who are in a certain marginal position in an industry and who may manage in some industries, given the kind of price leadership which some are able to execute, to have a reasonably good life. Others may find themselves in boom time doing reasonably well, but when business is slow, they may find it very difficult to survive. In those circumstances particularly, will the small and marginal producers have any kind of recourse at all, given the way in which the International Trade Tribunal will be constituted under Bill C-110?

There is a third concern which relates to the question of an arm's length relationship which the tribunal is supposed to have with the Government. This is actually thrown into question by the fact that it cannot initiate its own inquiries. Does the fact that the large producers producing the majority of the products will have access to this tribunal make up for the fact that the tribunal is not able to initiate inquiries? The legislation is not very clear on this matter, but we can certainly imagine a situation in which the new tribunal will have a very close relationship with government and with large producers. What then is the situation of the smaller producers to whom I have already referred?

Since the purpose of this new International Trade Tribunal is supposed to be to deal with international trade and economic issues, it should surely have a much larger and more independent role in considering what is happening in the various industries, in initiating inquiries, and in recommending the kinds of adjustment assistance measures that may be necessary.

We are concerned that this Bill is surely part of the reorganization of Canada's trading system which this Conservative Government is carrying out. This is just one more example of the kind of bending over backward to U.S. interests which has characterized the Conservative Government in negotiating the trade deal that is being pursued these days in the legislative committee on Bill C-130, and in other areas as well.

This is a Ministry which all too often has been ready to sell out to American interests, to forget what American industries do to Canadian industries, particularly through the use of American trade tribunals. In northwestern Ontario we have had to live for months with that 15 per cent export tax which

was imposed on Canadian softwood producers and continues to be imposed on Ontario softwood producers because this Government buckled under to American pressure. It was so stricken with fear that it would not be able to win before the American trade tribunal that it accepted an export tax on our lumber, though we in Ontario are convinced that there has never been any subsidization of the industry through stumpage prices for our timber.

If the Sacred Government in British Columbia did not have the strength and courage to charge the proper amount for stumpage, then let British Columbia Governments go ahead and deal with the matter properly. We do not need American Governments under U.S. industry pressure forcing the B.C. Government to do the right thing. However, that should not be imposed on the people of Ontario, the workers in the forest and sawmills of Ontario, as it has been to the detriment of the industry and the loss of hundreds of jobs in northern Ontario already. In the context of what U.S. law allows and what U.S. tribunals make possible for U.S. industry, we see in this Bill just one more example of an inability of the Conservative Government to defend Canadian interests.

I note in glancing over the material my colleague, the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor, has provided that he focused at report stage on a number of amendments which were designed to take care of some of these shortcomings in the Bill. Having read the record of that debate, I note that the Minister of State for Finance argued time after time that this would be some sort of a violation of our GATT obligations. He provided all kinds of assurances that all was well in the Bill.

We are not convinced of that. We are not impressed that this Bill will do things right. Because the amendments we put forward to try to make the Bill what it should be were not accepted, I state clearly now that the New Democratic caucus does not support Bill C-110, and when you put the question in a moment, Mr. Speaker, of course we will follow through on the statement I have just made.

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a few concerns about this legislation that I want to put on the record. I know that most Hon. Members would rather be at home than here this evening, so I will not take too long to say what I have to say.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Keeper: I am sure that my remarks will be welcomed in the same enthusiastic fashion.

When it comes to the textile industry, there are theories of international trade, theories of free trade, and theories of prosperity coming as a result of greater liberalization of trade. When I put the theories of the economists on the one hand and the reality of the workers in the textile industry on the other hand, I find that my heart is with those in the textile industry. My heart is with those in the textile industry. I say that before we open our doors to greater competition in the textile industry, we ought to take care to see that the people presently