

Canadian Trade Policy

of our own initiatives. The snowmobile was developed and built in Quebec and led to the creation of a large snowmobile industry. But the spin-off benefits of that development are being realized in Indonesia, of all places, where no snow falls. Practically all snowmobile suits on the market in this country come in from off-shore. We must avoid this sort of thing in future. The suits are made wholly out of synthetic fibres, mainly nylon. If we had retained the manufacture of snowmobile suits in Canada, our textile industry probably would not be in its present difficulties. Therefore in future we will need to plan ahead in case similar circumstances arise. We do not want the fruits of our own development, the spin-off, as it were, to be harvested by other countries. Such spin-off benefits should be retained in this country. The same could be said for snowmobile shoes, boots, mittens and hats. They are made outside this country but ought to be made in Canada. I hope we shall plan ahead and not allow this to happen again.

I have nearly finished, Mr. Speaker. I close with a word regarding the GATT negotiations. Generally I think we are all in favour of freer trade. Increased free trade is the trend in the world. This country has erected relatively few non-tariff barriers and pays few hidden subsidies. For that reason some of us are greatly concerned, and I include people in industry, because many countries with whom we trade pay hidden subsidies and have erected such barriers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member whose allotted time has expired. It being six o'clock I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. The hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Sharp).

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, I do not wonder that you are not too familiar with the name of my riding. I am not very familiar with it myself. I have very seldom heard myself referred to in this way, although I must say it is a great tribute to my riding. I have not had an opportunity, as have many other members, of making a speech on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne extolling the virtues of that great riding in the centre of Toronto. Perhaps I will do that sometime in the future.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: This evening I want to participate in the debate on the motion put down by the opposition on trade policy, particularly negotiations respecting GATT. I begin by offering a comment, not so much on the substance of this motion as on the rules of the House and the way they are being used.

[Mr. Kempling.]

It is quite true that an opposition motion does not require more than a very short notice to the government or to the House. However, if a matter like this is to be taken seriously, more notice should be given so that ministers can prepare their replies.

The hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) complained when he came into the House about the absence of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Chrétien) and of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald). However, the hon. member for York-Simcoe is not here now. However, I see he is just about to arrive.

Ministers have many important engagements. If the official opposition wants them to be in the House, they can give more than 24 hours' notice. I hope that in the future, when motions of this kind are proposed, 48 hours' or more notice will be given. I have been a House leader. I always tried to urge the House leaders for the opposition to give us a lot of notice on these motions, not because the government cannot reply, but if we are going to have a useful debate let us have reasonable notice so that ministers can prepare themselves properly.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: The second point I would like to make is this. I was looking at this motion which complains about the propensity of the government to act in secret, and condemns its failure to provide for an open public discussion on future Canadian trade policy. I searched my memory to find if there was any occasion recently when the opposition had placed any questions on the order paper, or orally in the question period, about the Canadian position in the GATT negotiations. It may be that buried in some of the questions on the order paper are some questions dealing with the GATT negotiations. I could not recall them. I have sat in this House during nearly every question period for years and years, certainly since 1973 when the Tokyo round began, and I do not remember a single occasion when the opposition in its search for facts asked any questions on this subject, to which we could respond.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Sharp: How many questions have the opposition asked orally during the question period? This is the first time I have heard the subject mentioned in years. I find it difficult to take seriously the charge of secrecy on the part of the government, or of not giving an opportunity for an open public discussion. There have been 75 or 100 opposition days since the Tokyo round began. Not one was devoted to this subject. Now at this late date, after three to four years, the opposition complains about the lack of a public discussion. It is a phony.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: I listened very carefully to the speech of the hon. member for York-Simcoe, waiting for him to express the views of the opposition on trade policy. I waited to hear him make some suggestions as to what line we ought to take in Geneva, or wherever it happens to be we will be meeting. I waited to hear what the official opposition would like to see by way of