

when we were considering the previous amendment. I shall not repeat them, but I feel this is the first question I must raise with regard to clause 27.

**Mr. Pepin:** Would the hon. member kindly repeat the argument he made previously? I was searching my mind in an effort to understand it and became somewhat confused in the process before finding out that he was speaking on the wrong amendment.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Very well. Briefly it is this. We are dealing with clause 27, an amendment to the Customs Act. It allows the government to take certain action to exclude from the country or, shall we say, by regulation prohibit or otherwise regulate the entry of goods to which an arrangement or commitment between Canada and any country relates.

● (8:30 p.m.)

I was asking whether the power given by this proposed amendment would be subject to parliamentary review, say in a period of 180 days as was the case in respect of the surtax applied by the minister under the authority of the Customs Act, which says that unless the Order in Council is confirmed by the House, it shall expire. In other words, executive action taken by the Governor in Council is subject to review by Parliament.

I was asking whether the action envisaged in this clause is subject to such a review. That is my first question. Secondly, I wish to reinforce the arguments made by my colleague from Peace River. I would ask all members of the finance committee, with the exception of the minister's parliamentary secretary, whether their attention was directed to the fact that this amendment touched goods other than textiles. As recorded at page 15:6 of issue No. 15 of the proceedings of the Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs, the parliamentary secretary made this statement:

Mr. Chairman, in addition to these principal points with which I have dealt, there are a number of consequential amendments necessary which I believe we will deal with in our detailed discussions of the bill.

Up to this point the parliamentary secretary had been dealing with textiles. There is very cursory mention of clause 27 dealing with textiles. I am sorry the hon. member for Coast Chilcotin (Mr. St. Pierre) is not here, because he is one member on the government side who has been most penetrating in his examination and frankly critical of many of the features of this bill. I am sure he would share the opinion of the rest of the members of the committee that they were dealing with textiles.

My colleague from Peace River, who on perhaps more mature reflection has examined the exact wording of this consequential amendment, sees that it goes from apples to peanuts to zebras in respect of what commodities may be excluded. It goes far beyond textiles. It is one thing for the government to advance arguments, through the statements of the minister and his parliamentary secretary in the House and in the committee, concerning the need to give formal approval to a textile advisory board, but then it comes in with an amendment to the Customs

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Act which says that if there is an agreement of any kind covering any type of goods, the government can propose a further amendment to the Customs Act and there can be action to either prohibit or otherwise regulate the entry into the country of any commodity.

It is at this point that I say I do not think the government has come forward with clean hands. I do not believe it has necessarily actively suppressed any item, but nowhere is there an indication why the government wants additional power to limit the import of all types of commodities or goods which, incidentally, unless the minister can give an affirmative answer to my first question, means the Governor in Council can do it and it is not subject to review by anyone. One cannot within a statutory instrument merely change what it covers. It can merely say whether it affects the rights of individuals or is retroactive or deficient in itself—but not within the ambit of the power that is being asked in this amendment. Even at this late date I join my colleague from Peace River and say this clause goes far beyond the power that the government indicated to the House it was asking us to give.

**Mr. Cliff Downey (Battle River):** Mr. Speaker, the amendment before us, which proposes to delete clause 27, is very significant. This provision pertains specifically to the Customs Act. As the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) said, there is in this clause wide power to use the legislation to prohibit any and all manner of imports into Canada. When one sees the many areas covered by the bill and the protection it affords one specific industry, as well as the powers granted under it in respect of other areas of imports, one understands the troubles it could create in respect of our trading relations with other countries.

One of the briefs submitted to the committee by, I believe, the Canadian Importers' Association pointed out the difficult situation that could arise in respect of trading relations and so far as importers are concerned. I believe we must look at the far reaching effects of this legislation as it applies to international trade in general.

● (8:40 p.m.)

As I pointed out earlier today, we have had good trading relations with the Pacific rim countries. Trade relations and trade prospects there are very difficult to assess. It is difficult to assess the scope of these trade relations and the business that may accrue from them in the future.

**Mr. Pepin:** You said all that this afternoon.

**Mr. Downey:** It would seem that with the European Common Market countries tending to become dependent upon each other and to be more restricted to that area, it becomes imperative that the general attitude which we present to our trading partners in the Pacific rim grow in importance as the years go by. There was an article in one of the newspapers recently about the possibility of trading relations between Pacific rim countries and the United States breaking down where they have been able to establish voluntary quotas.