

Customs Tariff Amendment Act, 1971

the emergency situation confronting the chemical and plastic industries, we believe it is imperative that policies be developed immediately to ensure that this kind of tariff protection is not required and that our industries will be in a position to manage on their own in a free trade world.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Penner in the chair.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Stewart (Okanagan-Kootenay)): I thank the committee for its warm applause.

Shall clause one carry?

On clause 1

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, a number of questions were raised last night by the hon. member for Edmonton West concerning some of the more exotic exemptions. One of the things we are getting into in a big way is the importation of exotic plants from Florida used in substitution for room dividers and in the arrangement of government offices. I note that among these plants are included palms, ferns, rubber plants, cannas, dahlias, paeonias, lilacs—

An hon. Member: You are reading.

Mr. Peters: Yes, and I am mispronouncing some of the names, even when reading. I am not used to speaking about exotic plants. It has been said on several occasions that in some of these cases by establishing a most favoured nation tariff we are eliminating the possibility of some of our own companies producing in this field. My question in relation to the first five items on the schedule attached to clause one is this: how do we arrive at a most favoured nation tariff in relation to these plants; what type of request is made and by whom? I presume these are items which can really be produced in hot houses in our own country.

Mr. Mahoney: The most favoured nation status is one which is achieved by trade negotiations between Canada and other countries and involves the other countries treating Canadian imports in a favourable manner as well. The changes in the customs tariff rates themselves result from representations made by persons interested in importing these particular products.

The whole range of tariff items dealt with in this bill from 7801-1 to 7915-1 includes items which are probably in the same class. They are all horticultural products. The changes are being made because the government has acquiesced in requests made by the Canadian Horticultural Council. The hon. member for Edmonton West made several other points in his very whimsical, lighthearted and humorous speech last night. He intimated that his hon. friend from Halifax-East Hants could probably have done better. I think those of us who listened to the hon. member would be inclined to agree. Be that as it may, he held up to ridicule the various items affecting horticulture which have been proposed in this amending bill following, as I have stated, representations by the Canadian Horticultural Council. I will certainly communicate his views to the Council.

The hon. member asked what macerated paper pads were—item 19947-1. Well, these are pads made of a thick

[Mr. Saltzman.]

layer of loose, ground up newsprint secured between two sheets of kraft paper, and they are used in the packaging of fruit to prevent it being bruised in transit. This particular tariff change will be of principal benefit to the fruit growers of British Columbia.

• (3:40 p.m.)

The hon. member for Waterloo also inquired why the one-third cent per gallon rate on fractions of petroleum under item 26910-1 was retained. This was the rate recommended by the tariff board. There were objections to a reduction in duty on the part of Canadian refiners. The hon. member for Edmonton West emphasized last night the importance of the petrochemical industry in a neighbouring riding to his. The refining industry is also of considerable importance in the Edmonton district and this is a factor to be borne in mind. In any case this, along with one other change in the bill, is based on recommendations made by the tariff board which the government has accepted without change.

The hon. member for Edmonton West made considerable fun of item 40918-1, being bird scaring devices. He wondered just what the item meant. I can only say that the wording of the tariff describes the devices that will in the future be admitted duty free. The request for this change in the tariff came from the Association of British Columbia Grape Growers, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Horticultural Council, the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and the Ontario Grape Growers Marketing Board. While the hon. member for Edmonton West was unable to take this item seriously, evidently those organizations do regard these particular devices as being of considerable importance to them in the pursuit of their agricultural vocations.

The hon. member also suggested that items 44043-1 and 44047-1 pertaining to aircraft were renewed each year. In fact, they are not renewed each year. Normally they are renewed for two or three year periods. The renewal proposed in the present bill is for three years. The Air Industries Association of Canada asked that these items be retained on a temporary basis.

Parts for the repair or remanufacture of turbines under item 44210-1 was also questioned by the hon. member for Edmonton West. These parts are presently admitted free of duty when they are used for the manufacture in Canada of turbines. Glass beads was another item the hon. member regarded as somewhat hilarious, item 69805-1. It is an odd coincidence, but the request for this particular tariff change was made by the office of the regional resources co-ordinator of the Human Resources Development Authority of the government of the province of Alberta. The principal beneficiary of this particular tariff change will be Indians and Eskimos for the execution of native crafts.

Metallic trading checks, item 99208-1, are subject to regulation by the Governor in Council, and the reason for this is to ensure that imports of these items will be bona fide souvenir or memorial type coins and will not be the kind of token that could be advantageously used in counterfeit fashion in vending machines.

The question of tariff board reports was also raised by the hon. member and he queried their implementation, particularly with regard to tariff item 93902-3, polyethy-