

*Customs Tariff*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Unless hon. members think the information should be given, I suggest this question should be placed on the order paper. But if there is unanimous agreement on the part of hon. members—

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is no agreement. I would think this type of question should be placed on the order paper.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** With deference, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the current hockey season is well under way and Canada's national team is engaged in important international competition, could the minister indicate whether assistance has been forthcoming from the government this year, and in what amount?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member is asking whether assistance has been given. If he thinks there is urgency in a question asked in this form, the matter could be discussed at the time of adjournment.

● (3:10 p.m.)

**CUSTOMS TARIFF**

**Hon. C. M. Drury (for the Minister of Finance)** moved the second reading of Bill No. C-131, to amend the Customs Tariff.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the said motion?

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** No, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Since no one rose I took it there would be no debate, but I am quite prepared to recognize the hon. member for Edmonton West.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Mr. Speaker, there is a wall of noise between Your Honour and this part of the house, and notwithstanding your most valiant efforts even the microphone is of no assistance in carrying your voice this far. I thought there would be a statement from the government at this stage. In view of the fact that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) is not present this afternoon, his parliamentary secretary is going to carry on in his stead. But since there is to be no such statement I propose to make a few remarks at this stage of the bill, not having had an opportunity, because of demands on my time in another place, to do so at the resolution stage. Some of my colleagues may also wish to address a few remarks at this stage.

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

This bill in fact brings before the house the proposals that were contained in the budget of November, 1967, which formed part of the Kennedy round of negotiations that Canada entered into. The committee on finance, trade and economic affairs considered the bulk of these resolutions from January to March, 1968. So in view of all this we must realize that we are being asked to discuss very old matters. I must say that I think this rather awkward performance, and something else which I will raise before Your Honour in a moment, represent part of the price that had to be paid because the Prime Minister decided to call an election for purely personal and electoral benefits. This may be all right. I see the Minister of Defence Production nod his head in satisfaction, or perhaps in self-satisfaction because he benefited from the move. In so far as Canada is concerned, however, we find ourselves in a difficult position internationally as a result of this action, and so does the house. This bill could have been brought forward much earlier if the government had seen fit to do so. As a matter of the fact, the house, in relation to this bill as well as the anti-dumping convention, is the victim of this lack of planning.

Many plaintive assertions have been made from the government side about the difficulty of putting the legislation through. I say to them that they are falling into the same pattern of scheduling legislation in the same disarrayed fashion as happened in 1963 and 1964. In such cases the opposition is often blamed and a great case is made before the press and other communications media which, like so many innocent lambs, swallow this propaganda. The records indicate otherwise. The house knows that this legislation has been produced following long negotiations. We went through all of this in committee. It seems to me it would have been quite simple to have it brought forward as one of the first items on the order paper so that his house could discharge its commitments honourably and without pressure.

Having said this, I want to come to the other point. I know that the government engaged in the very dubious procedure of resorting to the Financial Administration Act for authority to pass an order in council last spring giving some patina of legitimacy to these proposals, not only the Kennedy round proposals but the budgetary proposals in which the present Secretary of State for External Affairs proposed to increase certain duties on liquor and tobacco. I protest with all the power I have against this procedure of