

It is also proposed to amend the section so that the list may now contain this limiting provision, and I emphasize this:

(a.2) to limit or keep under surveillance the export of any raw or processed material that is produced in Canada in circumstances of surplus supply and depressed prices and that is not a produce of agriculture;

As hon. members are aware, there are two other sections. One deals with agriculture and the other deals with the termination of the present act.

I should like to deal mainly with section 3, the section that has triggered the belief of the NDP that this is in truth their two-price system coming into law.

We have heard the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) undertake to meet the first item on the list of four presented by the leader of the NDP. The Prime Minister, I understand, proposes to introduce some more legislation with respect to the review board. I should like to know if there is any chance that this amendment, which was presented in a rather innocuous way, is in truth meeting the number two item on the shopping list of the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), namely a two-price system with respect to materials that may be exported from Canada.

I say that because, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) pointed out in the House not too long ago, this is a much too complicated question to be treated in an off-hand manner. I am not saying that there are not circumstances in respect of which some type of two-price system is required, but if we are going to a two-price system across the board, leaving it to the government to decide what may or should be included in that system without any reference to parliament, then I think the fear that the Minister of Finance had only a few days ago that we might trigger international consequences could be well founded.

I believe that we in Canada should never forget that exports, in relation to production in this country, represent 71.3 per cent of production. That is a fantastic figure if you review the world comparable figures. That figure is an increase over the 43 per cent for 1960 and 42.5 per cent in 1950. We have been rapidly expanding our exports in relation to production. To tinker with this vast field without due deliberation is exceedingly dangerous. The figure of 73.1 per cent contrasts with the case of the United States, where their exports are 14.4 per cent of total production. The U.S.S.R. has only 7 per cent of their exports in relation to production. We in Canada have almost ten times what the U.S.S.R. has.

When we start talking about a two-price system with respect to the exportation of our commodities, Mr. Speaker, we are really talking about a two-price system in relation to our trade with the United States. We should bear in mind that such trade is very much a two way street. For example, according to the American figures, in 1973 our trade with the United States hit \$17.8 billion in exports and our imports from that country were \$15.1 billion. As I indicated during the famous football debate, there is a \$2.5 billion transfer of invisibles that makes the difference in our trading pattern with the United States.

What I want to indicate is that we should not treat this question of tinkering with our trade patterns very lightly. I could refer to the fact that 21 per cent of the total United States export trade and 26 per cent of their import trade is

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with Canada, for example. This is the magnitude of the subject we are dealing with. When we deal specifically with the United States I think we should bear in mind that they rely to the extent of 87 per cent of their requirements on imports of bauxite from foreign sources, asbestos 81 per cent, chromium 100 per cent, cobalt 92 per cent, manganese 95 per cent, nickel 90 per cent, platinum 93 per cent, tin 100 per cent, and tungsten 44 per cent. That is the dependence of the United States on such import items. As I have pointed out, many of these items in gross export-import terms come from Canada.

I urge hon. members to consider these amendments. I would appreciate it if the minister, upon his return, would enter the debate and tell us frankly what he has in mind in the amendments that he is proposing. I think he should satisfy us that he is not trying to do something rather quietly that he does not have the courage to have a full debate on.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I am not turning down categorically the suggestion of a two-price system. What I am saying is that I think it is time that this government was more candid with members of this House and with the people of Canada. If they intend to introduce some policy, let them be explicit and elaborate on it and then let the House judge whether it is worthy of our endorsement.

I think it is most disturbing that we are asked to deal repeatedly with odds and sods of legislation without any over-all industrial strategy or plan for the control or utilization of the resources of this country. This government is obviously drifting and is responding only to whatever prodding it happens to get from the NDP. This is a sad way to run the country.

I think it is time for members to dig in their heels and tell the government that it is not good enough to give us these little bits of legislation, that they claim are designed to serve some purpose, without giving us some over-all approach or strategy as to how they can operate both economically and in the resource field in the coming years.

In the past year the administration of this act has become more harsh than it has been in previous years. From a report I received just a few minutes ago, I notice that the number of applications for export and import permits has gone up. Of 20 suspected violations of the Export and Import Permits Act which have been investigated, charges are being laid in seven cases.

There was a conviction in one case; the others have not been decided. This is the first time there have been so many prosecutions under the act. In committee we shall want to know why the number of prosecutions has suddenly increased. Why are people being convicted for contravening the act? I ask this as for many years there was little trouble with the administration of the act in the sense that few people committed infractions.

● (1530)

We want to see this bill go to committee. We are dealing with a highly technical field. Although this debate is all very well, in the final analysis many of the questions which we feel proper to consider can only be dealt with in committee. We shall reserve our judgment until we have heard the evidence which may be produced before the