

Customs Tariff

the United States. It is very important that we have a good balance between uninhibited free trade on the one side and too much protectionism on the other. We must have a policy of fair trade in this country. If we have a move back to the policies of the 1930s, when there was tremendous protectionism, retaliation and trade wars, we could eventually end up with trade wars which could become real wars and the whole world will suffer as a result.

We must seriously consider our trade and economic policies. We must start to modernize and become more competitive so that we can sell more manufactured goods on the international market. We must start planning in order to conserve our resources in a more efficient and intelligent way so that all Canadians will benefit.

It is about time that we started looking at the real world of advanced technology, the newest technology available, so that we can start to produce such products as do many other countries in the world. Then we would not have to import technological goods from Japan, the United States or western Europe. We should start to produce hardware, software and computers so that Canadians will have jobs in the years ahead. I have tremendous faith in this country. We can build a tremendous Canada. We have the resources, the wealth, the people and the skills. What we have lacked in the last few years has been a national vision or the leadership to bring Canadians together for a common goal.

I cannot resist, while speaking on a customs tariff Bill, pointing out that although some tinkering may be fine, I cannot support only that type of tinkering. We must get to the fundamental cause of problems and try to solve them. We have a disintegrating economy, over 1.5 million Canadians unemployed, and we must do something about it. If the Swiss, Germans, French, Japanese and Americans can do something about it, then surely we in this country can do at least as well, if not better.

Mr. Nielsen: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Government would now permit the question to be put.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I think the Hon. Member has made that particular point on several occasions.

Mr. Nielsen: I will be doing it again, too.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Procedurally, I do not feel that the Hon. Member for Yukon is entitled to raise the same point of order again and again and again at his liberty.

Mr. Nielsen: You want to believe he can.

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I am very disturbed by the actions of the Conservative Party in relation to the legislation before us this afternoon. Certainly we in the Opposition are concerned about the performance of the Government, but I would say that the acts of the Conservative Party here this afternoon in attempting to dismiss this Bill quickly through the House without taking a last look at the implications for Canada speak about its general approach to problems in this nation.

The former finance critic and present external affairs critic of the Conservative Party has said: "If we tell the people what we are about, they will not vote for us, so we will continue to play games with the Government in an attempt to embarrass it and will fool around rather than get down to the actual substance". I suggest that the Ayatollah from northern Canada who is making pronouncements today in the House should get down to the gut issues facing Canadians. He should stop fooling around with the kind of problems we have in this country and start putting their position on the record. He might as well start with this Bill or the previous Bill, which they persisted in fooling around with.

● (1720)

The issue before us again is tariff policy in Canada and it is vitally important. Tariff policy, taxation policy, industrial strategy, competition legislation are key matter that this Government is content simply to turn the knobs and pull the levers on, rather than get down to serious important planning on where we are going in Canada. This is a very vital Bill before us today and, as my colleague who spoke previously indicated, we should not be simply tampering with it. We should be looking at customs tariff policy as a mechanism for shaping our national economy and providing Canadians with an opportunity to develop industry within their own country.

I want to work for a few moments with the idea that the customs tariffs are vitally important in one particular sector, the marine industrial sector. It appears that within the provisions of Clause 3 of this legislation preferential tariffs are of concern to the Government. Hopefully some day the Official Opposition will wake up and it will become a concern to them, because many of the ridings which they represent are vitally concerned. But ultimately a marine industrial strategy is what we are talking about and the effects of customs tariffs on building and operating vessels in Canada.

At the present time we are led to believe that the Government of Canada has developed a marine industrial development strategy and that it refuses to implement it for fear of trade repercussions from trading partners around the world. It is interesting that whenever we attempt to talk about it under legislation such as the provisions in Clause 3, things such as GATT are thrown up to us, that it would violate such agreements. Under the present situation shipbuilding is not covered, which means that we could take the same advantage that other Canadians are taking.

To come back to the question of the federal Government's development of a marine industrial strategy, it is our understanding that that policy has been in place. It was promised when this Parliament first convened in 1980. It was restated time after time that this policy was going to be developed and implemented, and it would affect major regions of this country. The Pacific region would benefit; the Great Lakes region would benefit; the Hamilton-St. Catharines area; the Atlantic Provinces would benefit; Saint John, New Brunswick. So