

Export and Import Permits Act

Mr. Angus: Perhaps if the Hon. Member would let me finish explaining the process the NDP goes through. In advance of conventions, riding associations as well as some of the affiliated organizations will pass resolutions and send them to convention. At convention, every delegate will get a book of resolutions that have been proposed by the rank and file of the Party for consideration by convention.

We have a resolutions committee that will sift through the proposed resolutions, look at previous resolutions that had been adopted to determine if they are still relevant, and try to weed out any conflicts. We admit that from time to time there have been conflicts, in terms of the wording, which have only been discovered later on.

That committee reports to convention and indicates an order of priority of the resolutions for debate. That is debated as well, because sometimes people would like their particular issue moved up on the agenda.

Ultimately, some resolutions are debated at convention. We never have enough time to debate every resolution in the resolutions book. Hundreds of resolutions are submitted to our federal and provincial conventions.

The other point is that those resolutions which are not dealt with at convention are automatically referred to our federal council for consideration. For example, at our last convention in Montreal in 1987, a resolution that I had drafted and submitted from my riding association had not been dealt with by the floor. It was later referred to the federal council which, in turn, adopted it in a different form. I simply want people to understand the process.

We have provincial conventions that make decisions which are not necessarily binding on the federal Party or caucus until those policies have been adopted by the convention. Resolution No. 5 adopted by the federal council of NDP in 1983, reads:

The immediate protection of jobs in the industry through import restrictions to ensure Canadian industry at least its present share of the domestic market until the removal of such restrictions is warranted by:

- (a) improved productivity and competitiveness of the Canadian economy as a whole; and
- (b) proven adherence of competitor nations to recognized standards of human rights and economic justice as adopted by the I.L.O. in the form of Convention and Recommendations.

That is the operative resolution by which we are governed.

I support my colleague, the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap), in his ongoing attempt to assist workers in the apparel industry. I know his interest in their ability to keep their jobs, as well as obtain decent pay, and to have some protection from the kind of competition we are seeing from other countries which are paying in a day what we do not consider legal pay for an hour's work.

The Hon. Member for Spadina has proposed in Bill C-243 that as a manufacturer expands his operation and requires additional materials from offshore he be allowed to do so in

proportion to the amount of sales and manufacturing. I think that makes a lot of sense.

The Liberal spokesperson suggested that there may be some things wrong with the Bill but the general concept of it was worth pursuing. He hoped that there would be a mechanism to allow the substance of this Bill to be sent to a committee for further consideration.

I believe the Parliamentary Secretary also indicated the importance of this industry and of trying to enhance it. We may disagree on the direction we should take, but perhaps there is a willingness to consider transferring the subject matter to a standing committee. Perhaps members on the Government side will want to consider that option.

In conclusion, I support Bill C-243. I wanted to clarify the process of how the NDP develops its resolutions, and I wanted to caution Members not to mix resolutions proposed with resolutions passed.

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Calgary South): Madam Speaker, the speech by the Hon. Member who just spoke was interesting. I have taken the opportunity to check some of their resolutions, including Resolution B.3.1 of the New Democratic Party, Resolution B.2.2 from the 1977 convention, Resolution B.1.1. from the 1981 convention resolutions, and Resolution B.9.2. from its 1987 convention resolutions. According to those resolutions the NDP supported and is committed to eliminating trade barriers to manufactured imports from the Third World.

I find it most interesting that their latest 1987 convention states that they are committed to eliminating trade barriers to manufactured imports from the Third World.

I wish to take this opportunity to shed a little light on the current situation with regard to the performance of the domestic clothing industry in the face of import competition from low-cost countries. Perhaps an encouraging word on the moderation of the growth of these low-cost imports in recent years would cause the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap) to reconsider the necessity of introducing import quotas that cut back levels, as he has sought to do through Bill C-243 to amend the Export and Import Permits Act.

The provisions contained in this Bill would limit the issuance of permits allowing clothing imports to enter Canada to a level imported in 1983, with only domestic producers being allowed to import above that year's level.

The reason behind the suggested amendment to the Export and Import Permits Act to put these quotas into effect is a recognition that measures to protect the apparel industry would benefit Canada by encouraging investment and thus contributing to economic growth and employment opportunities.

However, I wish to demonstrate that the special measures of protection this Government has had in place for several years