

*Investment Canada Act*

Mr. Speaker, his colleague, the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, who is responsible for the textile industry—perhaps not the import section of it, but for the industry in general—had all the time in the world to introduce an Investment Canada Bill and to send his leader to New York, Washington, and all over the place to tell the Americans what a great thing it would be to have unrestricted investment provisions from here on in. But he failed to protect these jobs allegedly because the Minister for International Trade did not have the time.

It is clear this Government looks at its priorities in a rather unusual way. It has the time to speak to foreign investors in New York, alleging that it wants to create more jobs, but does not have the time to introduce legislation and protective measures to protect the jobs we have already. You can understand, Mr. Speaker, that my constituents who work in the textiles and footwear industries are very concerned.

I would like to read to you, Mr. Speaker, a letter which was sent by The Shoe Manufacturers' Association of Canada on April 1, 1985. The letter is addressed to the Minister for International Trade. It says in part:

Dear Mr. Kelleher:

In your letter of October 16, 1984, nearly six months ago, you wrote me that "I hope to be in a position to get together with you, representatives of your association and the unions at an early opportunity". We know that as Minister for International Trade you are travelling very much and that you are very busy but we would appreciate an hour of your time in April.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, eight months after this Government was sworn into office, no representative of Cabinet had the time to meet with people from the shoe industry. But they had all the time in the world to give away the store to large American investors without any protective measures at all for the people of my riding and for others in this country who are involved in that particular industry.

I would like to bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, a report which was tabled in this House and given to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion on January 14, 1985. This report is entitled, "Trousers, Slacks, Shorts, Jeans, Overalls and Coveralls. A Report to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion". This report describes all of the problems of that industry and what restrictions are necessary in order to protect the jobs we already have. We in our Party are very concerned about the way in which this Government has been proceeding with this legislation as well as other measures. We want protective measures. We want foreign investment but we do not want it at the expense of Canadian jobs. Therefore, the amendments proposed by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy), are very necessary and, of course, I support those amendments.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville):** This afternoon the House is considering several motions introduced by the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party. The Bill refers to the power of the responsible Minister, Mr. Speaker, and to many other very important powers.

**Mr. Boudria:** The "irresponsible" Minister.

**Mr. Nystrom:** I beg your pardon?

**Mr. Boudria:** The "irresponsible" Minister.

**Mr. Nystrom:** The "irresponsible" Minister. That comment was made by the Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

Well, Mr. Speaker, many important duties are mentioned here. For instance, the Minister shall encourage business investment by such means and in such manner as the Minister deems appropriate. Second, he shall assist Canadian business to exploit opportunities for investment and technological advancement. Third, he shall carry out research and analysis relating to domestic and international investment. Fourth, he shall provide investment information services and other investment services to facilitate economic growth in Canada.

And other important duties, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

I believe, despite these kinds of powers which we see given to the Minister in this particular session, there are a number of things missing. I think that the whole thrust of this particular Bill weakens the position of the federal Government in terms of foreign investment, investment which is so important to the future of Canadians as far as jobs are concerned. It is very important that our country assert its sovereignty and independence, in no way any stronger than that of other countries around the world.

One way of doing that is by accepting many of these motions put forward today by the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party. These motions will strengthen the role of the Minister and the Government when it comes to foreign investment in our country. We are not asking for anything more than other countries do. We see a positive assertion of economic nationalism in most countries around the world.

We sometimes criticize the Americans for being too nationalistic, "It is my country, right or wrong", or Japan for being too protectionist in the way it organizes its economy or, indeed, many European countries. There was a question in the House today from an Hon. Member of the Liberal Party with respect to the European Common Market. He asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) about the Europeans being too protectionist about some of their farm products. This particular question concerned beef. We had the Reagan-Mulroney summit in Quebec City. Our Prime Minister and the President of the United States talked about free trade and this new cuddly arrangement between these two good friends. But no sooner are the Prime Minister's officials back in Ottawa and President Reagan is back in Washington than the President's people announce this countervailing duty on hogs which hurts this multi-billion dollar Canadian industry.

Other countries around the world assert their independence and their sovereignty. They want control over their own economy and want to exercise their national powers. What we on this side of the House are seeing, and what I know a lot of Conservative back-benchers see but, of course, cannot say