

Customs Tariff

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has been discussing something outside of the bill and has now indicated that he is going to discuss something else which, I take it, is also outside of the bill. This is a debate on a bill to amend the Customs Tariff. In fairness to all hon. members I think I am bound to raise the point which you yourself raised earlier, Mr. Speaker. This is not a wide ranging debate on trade; it is not a wide ranging debate on tariff questions. It is a debate on the principle of a bill to make certain specific changes in the Customs Tariff. That is all it is.

It is not in order to debate items that are outside the scope of this bill which is now before the house, namely Bill No. C-74. Otherwise the thousands of items that appear in the Customs Tariff would all be open to debate as to the proper rates upon them every time a bill to amend the Customs Tariff with respect to certain particular and named items is introduced in the house. We have had the resolution stage. We have had the budget debate. This matter could have been discussed there. We went all over these matters in the debate last week in the committee on ways and means on the resolution that preceded this bill. All these proposed amendments to the Customs Tariff were set out clearly and in extenso in the resolution which was approved. Here we are dealing simply with the most specific kind of amendments to the Customs Tariff which, in my respectful submission, would not give rise to a debate on trade or on the appropriate tariff treatment of commodities that are not embraced within the scope of Bill No. C-74.

Mr. Carter: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I say that we are discussing the application of certain tariff principles as applied to certain industries. I was only endeavouring to give the minister some suggestions and to support the suggestions made by the Fisheries Council of Canada as to how these principles could be applied to the fishing industry, which is sorely in need of some change in government policy and in tariff policy in order to enable it to survive. I presume it could be done on various tariff items. I presume we might amend various items with respect to certain things, but I do not see what would be gained.

Mr. Speaker: Basically, what the minister urges on the point of order is correct. It is not in order to discuss in detail matters which are not in the bill; nor is it in order to discuss in detail matters which are in the bill at this stage. That discussion would properly come when the items are called one by one in the committee of the whole.

[Mr. Carter.]

It is difficult to define exactly the limits of debate on a bill which covers a great many isolated and separate items. However, if the hon. member would limit himself to general principles I think he would be in order. For example, he has objected on the ground that some things might have been done in this bill for the fishing industry. I think it is in order to say in general terms that the bill does not do what ought to have been done. If he keeps his discussion to general terms I think it will be not only expeditious but in order.

Mr. Carter: You used the word "items", Mr. Speaker; I presume you did not mean tariff items, because this bill and the schedules name a number of tariff items to which I was not referring. I was referring particularly to certain tariff items right at the beginning, particularly to item 124b which is in the bill, but I was going on to indicate to the minister that there are many phases of the fishing industry which can be helped by an extension of the principle embodied in this bill, particularly in the case of life-saving equipment.

We have the Canada Shipping Act, which imposes certain regulations on ship owners. In complying with that act they are put to great expense. That expense today is a real handicap, and sometimes it is a real discouragement to the shipping industry and in particular to the fishing industry. I would think the minister would adopt the principle that in cases where equipment is necessary for lifesaving—a thing like that—the government should give the fullest possible encouragement to ship owners or vessel owners to get the best that is available on the market. The best available at the moment is this rubber life-saving raft which is very expensive and beyond the means of many. A reduction in the tariff or the placing of that item on the free list would be of great help not only to the fishing industry but to the coastal vessel industry and to the shipping industry in general.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Flynn in the chair.

On clause 1—*Man-made fibre.*

Mr. Benidickson: Mr. Chairman, in connection with the operation by the Department of National Revenue, which will apply if we adopt this bill and the schedules attached to it, what consideration has the minister given to some of the representations of industry to the effect that they do not get adequate consideration with respect to such things as the refund of overpayment of duty when a tariff change takes place? I think the minister will be familiar with the representations made by