

*Customs Act*

**Mr. Coldwell:** I am going to accept your ruling. However, I think it is rather difficult for anybody to anticipate in advance what a ruling would be, and I think that up to the present time at least I have not been out of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. This is not a ruling.

**Mr. Coldwell:** What I want to say is that so far as this and other industries that may come under this particular bill are concerned, every care must be exercised to see to it that the legislation is not used against the interests of the consuming public of the country. While unduly low prices have undoubtedly been caused in some instances, let me point out on the matter of dumping that I have had the opportunity of looking into and comparing prices in our two countries. I will give a concrete example. During the months of September and October I was in the United States. I keep my eyes open and look around when I am there to see what price levels are. I saw, for example, that Pepperell coloured sheets, a textile, 130 threads to the square inch, could be bought in the United States for \$4 a pair. I am talking now about normal stores. I saw that coloured Pepperell pillow cases, 130 threads to the square inch, could be bought for \$1.50 a pair.

A few days ago I was in a local store not very far from where I stand tonight, and I saw on the counter what I thought to be the identical sheeting. Actually it was slightly better quality, 180 threads to the square inch. What was their price? They were marked at \$16 a pair. When the saleslady asked me if I should like to buy a pair I said no because, I said, I had seen sheets of slightly lower quality in the United States the other day that I could have bought for \$4 a pair.

The government has to be careful in administering this act that it does not encourage that kind of exploitation of the Canadian people. There are other industries to which the same thing applies. Those of us who have gone to the United States and have gone into the regular stores—I am not talking about discount houses and that kind of thing—have seen the prices of television sets, radio sets and electrical equipment of almost every description. We know perfectly well that such things are not being sold in Canada at lower prices than in the United States but at very much higher prices and labour receives much less.

Therefore I say to the government that while we will support the elimination of unfair trade practices, while we will support any enactment to prevent United States or any other manufacturers dumping goods into this country at a loss to themselves or, as the

minister said, end of the season goods after they have taken their profit, I warn the government that we will not support the administration of an act of this description in such a way as to give shelter to people who would exploit the consumers of Canada.

Again let me come back to the textile industry in particular so far as dumping is concerned. A few moments ago the hon. member for Eglinton spoke with great warmth against any possibility of this legislation being used to interfere with British imports into this country on a legitimate basis. I remember that the government adopted the Geneva agreement on tariffs and trade and put it into effect on the 1st day of January. There was an escape clause which allowed us to delay the putting into effect of that agreement for a year but we took no advantage of it. Notwithstanding that fact, at the end of June of that year what happened? Out went the preferential tariff that Britain had received during wartime and up went the tariff against British textiles. Why? To protect our textile industry. There was no dumping, but what was the effect of that move? We prevented the United Kingdom from earning dollars here through her textile exports with the result that she had fewer dollars with which to buy our agricultural products, with which to buy Nova Scotia apples, Ontario cheese, maritime codfish, British Columbia salmon and so on and so forth.

Therefore I say that in dealing with legislation of this description we must be very careful that we are not buying something that may react against us. I hope that the minister will exercise every care and that he himself will exercise the authority under the act and not depute it to people several grades below him, because therein lies one of the real dangers. I say that we want to do everything we possibly can to protect those who suffer from unfair competition, particularly those who work in these industries; nonetheless we are very fearful lest this legislation be used against the consuming public of Canada.

True, we have a duty to the people who work in these industries, but I do not think we have any duty to those who have built up a heavy load of watered capital on which they want to pay high dividends. I do not think that at all. I do think we have a duty to do what we can to help those who suffer from unfair trade practices and unfair competition, if you will, but at the same time we have a duty towards the consuming public of this country.

A point was made by the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) which I too would like to make. This measure deals only with