

Customs Act

Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain): In dealing with the clause under discussion I want to say that I support it in so far as it will give some measure of protection to those industries which are finding themselves in difficulty, and particularly to the workers in industries that are confronted with the dumping of goods into this country. But I want to make it very clear that as far as I am concerned I support the measure on the ground that the good which will flow from the ministerial authority given by this legislation will go to the workers and the consumers of the country. I think there is a great possibility that under this measure the minister may not have proper information, and that there may be what might be termed an iron curtain prohibiting the minister from getting information as to profits from certain industries to which we are giving protection under the legislation, and it may be that certain industries will be protected which should not be.

In the first instance some of these industries may be uneconomical, and in the second place certain industries may be involved which have been investigated before and have been found to have made huge profits at the same time that their workers were being paid low wages. Therefore I hope the minister will use the power that is being given to him to protect first of all the workers and the consumers of the country.

In this connection I should like to say that when the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe spoke he said that some of the prices which are in effect in Canada are due to the law of supply and demand. That may be true in certain cases, but under the capitalist system and as the result of the investigations that have taken place, such as the price spreads inquiry and other royal commissions, we have found that artificial prices are established which the consumers of Canada are forced to pay, and the law of supply and demand does not enter into the picture at all. I think I just need to mention the rubber industry which was under investigation—

The Chairman: Order. I wonder if the hon. member would co-operate by confining his remarks to a discussion of the clause under consideration.

Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain): I should like to conform with the rules of the house, but in making some observations may I say that so far the committee has not been given the information necessary to come to a reasonable and logical conclusion with respect to the matter under discussion. We have not been given information as to the amount of goods being imported into Canada under what might be termed dumping procedure. I should like to read to the house

a statement contained in the newspaper *Style* of Wednesday, December 9. It bears the heading "Imports Only 3.2 Per Cent" and reads as follows:

The facts do not substantiate claims that the Canadian clothing industry has suffered from the competition of imports, Morgan Reid, of Simpsons-Sears, told the national associated women's wear bureau in an address last week. In 1951, he said, imports of clothing into Canada represented "only 3.2 per cent" of the total domestic disappearance. The figure remained the same in 1952, "and there is no reason to suspect that it will be significantly higher in 1953".

Therefore I want to submit that the bill under discussion is not going to do the thing which the government hopes it will, namely protect those industries which are finding themselves in difficulty today and, more important, the workers in those industries. As I see it, what is going to happen is simply what the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar indicated previously to the committee, namely that it will be found that these goods are being sold in the United States at a price which is normal there. I need only mention a few examples such as farm machinery, cars, trucks, electrical and photographic goods. Any member of this chamber can go to the United States and buy photographic equipment for 40 to 50 per cent less than when purchased in Canada. The same thing is true of electrical equipment, and as the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar indicated the other day—

The Chairman: Order. I hope I do not have to rise again, but this is really a speech that should have been made on second reading. The hon. member must confine himself to the terms of this clause.

Mr. McCullough (Moose Mountain): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With respect to my decision to support the measure, as I said at the outset I do so simply because under the Canadian capitalist system we have to be practical and we have to go along with the government in giving to the workers and the people generally the best kind of legislation we can to protect them under a system which in my opinion is very bad in any case. I want to submit that trade is a two-way street, and from the discussion that has taken place I believe all hon. members will agree that whether we like it or not this bill is going to lead to certain measures by which the government will undertake to protect these industries that are having difficulties, with the result that trade barriers will be built up and will to a large extent prevent international trade. Canada is mainly dependent on international trade for exporting a large volume of her goods, and I say that in that regard we are very vulnerable.