

Export and Import Permits Act

would be tied to increases in domestic production. Therefore, those manufacturers that increase their production in Canada would be able to increase imports by an amount equal to their increased domestic production.

My general feeling is that this is too rigid. This is saying that only manufacturers can import, that those who are in the business of selling goods, those in the retail trade for the sake of argument, would not be able to import. I think this could lead to tremendous trafficking in quotas. That probably exists to a certain extent under today's system, but I think it would be seriously aggravated as a result of such a rigid provision.

The Hon. Member said that the Bill was also designed to move to an orderly sharing of the world market. I have trouble with that. I think it is well known that many Third World and developing countries have objected to attempts by industrialized countries to shut them out of their markets. The Multi-Fibre Arrangement is really an attempt by the industrialized countries to limit imports from developing countries.

It is somewhat of an anomaly in the sense that it is called a Multi-Fibre Arrangement because I understand it is imposed by industrialized countries against the will of developing countries which have no choice but to accept it. The Hon. Member talks about an orderly sharing of the world market, and I think there is danger in this proposal of discriminating against developing countries and inhibiting their ability to grow.

These are the kinds of concerns I have with this Bill. On the other hand, I recognize that the Member has raised some legitimate concerns. There are some clothing manufacturers in my constituency. I received a letter from one such manufacturer about a year ago, a manufacturer of sweaters and sporting or active wear. This manufacturer said that as an employer of 175 Quebecers he believes his company and others like his are being adversely affected by the lack of policies of the federal Government toward regulating the import of foreign made garments. He said that significant growth would not occur in his industry unless Canada reduced the indiscriminate quantities of imported goods into Canada.

I suppose that is a legitimate issue, to the extent that there are wide fluctuations and huge increases from year to year in any one category. However, my understanding of the present legislation is that this is not supposed to happen. Perhaps there is a need to enforce better existing legislation rather than pass new legislation.

I acknowledge that the Hon. Member for Spadina stated that another objective of this Bill would be the control of quotas here in Canada. That is a legitimate concern which I have heard expressed in the past. For some reason our present quotas are not controlled by Canadians. They are set by Canadians but, for some reason or another, we seem to have lost control over them. This matter certainly bears attention and study by this House.

I thought that the comments of the Parliamentary Secretary on behalf of the Government were somewhat defensive. He ought to be defensive, given the recent decisions of the Government with respect to the duty remission scheme which was rolled back and is a much less substantial scheme than that which was envisioned by the industry and which the industry was led to believe by the Government would be the case. I see that the Member is shaking his head.

Mr. McDermid: It's what they requested.

Mr. Berger: He says that that is what the industry requested, that they got what they requested.

Mr. McDermid: They didn't get what they requested.

Mr. Berger: I have spoken to a number of manufacturers, and I can only go by what I am told by these people whom I regard to be knowledgeable. They live and work in the industry. They make their living by spending long hours every day at it. They tell me that they did not get what they expected, that they did not get what the Government promised over the course of the past two years. They say that the Government backed down on the promises it made to the industry because of the pressure applied on it by Washington.

Through its actions in the textile and clothing industry with respect to the duty remission scheme, the Government has indicated that our policies are not being made here in Canada by the Parliament of Canada according to the needs and best interests of Canadians but are being made in Washington according to the dictates of U.S. industry.

In conclusion, while I have great difficulty with some of the provisions of this Bill, I certainly believe that the subject matter is worthy of examination. If there were some method by which the subject matter of this Bill could be referred to a parliamentary committee, before which we could invite clothing manufacturers and clothing importers to tell us of their concerns first hand, that would be desirable. That is what I, on behalf of my Party, would support.

• (1440)

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Madam Speaker, I want to clear up some confusion that I believe may have inadvertently been left by the Hon. Member for Brampton—Georgetown (Mr. McDermid). He referred to New Democratic Party documents dated 1986, I believe, and pointed to what he felt was a conflicting position within those documents. The reference he used suggests to me that he was really looking at the resolutions that were to be submitted to convention.

Mr. McDermid: No. It was as reaffirmation of a 1977 resolution.

Mr. Angus: Again, not having seen the document referred to by the Hon. Member—

Mr. McDermid: It is your policy book.