

Customs Tariff

as a copper and lead producing nation, could have a greater industry than she has at the present time, good as it is. Item 538a refers to cotton yarns, wholly covered with a double layer of metallic strip in single strand only for use exclusively in the manufacture of electrical conductors. Do certain manufacturers in Canada apply that type of covering to electrical conductors? I am wondering whether it is something of an infinitesimal nature of whether, as a lead and copper producing nation, it is something we could manufacture instead of importing.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I cannot be certain whether there is any of that particular type of metal strip involved here. Item 538a refers to cotton yarns wholly covered with a double layer of metallic strip in single strand only. I presume anything that corresponds with that will bring the commodity within the description of the item.

Mr. Winch: That is what I had in mind. I do not know whether or not anything of that type is being manufactured in Canada. If it is part of the cable industry, why is there any change in the tariff?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): There is no change in the tariff created by this item. All we are doing is renumbering the item.

Mr. Benidickson: My hon. friend from Vancouver East referred to this copper item which may be bound with fabric. Could the minister indicate whether any proposals have been made by the United States to this country, which he will not divulge to the committee but which apparently have been publicized in Washington, include any offer of more lenient tariff relations between this country and the United States in so far as copper and some other products are concerned?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I must correct at once the impression left by the hon. member's remarks. The United States has not as yet made any offer at all, and presumably an offer will not be made until the GATT conference is convened later in the year. All that has happened so far has been that, in keeping with the practice of the United States, where the United States administration either of its own accord has considered using certain items for discussion purposes or has been asked to reduce the tariff on certain items in the United States, the administration puts out a notice of these particular items and any person in the United States who is interested in them has an opportunity of making representations to the United States tariff authorities. The mere

publication of this list should not be interpreted as an offer made by the United States to Canada or any other country.

Mr. Benidickson: The minister has referred to this offer—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No, I said it was not an offer.

Mr. Benidickson: Well, it is a notice of some kind. Would the minister indicate to us, because we are so vitally interested in this matter, what steps any member of the cabinet or any of our ambassadors or any of our officials abroad take when they see this type of thing? What is the machinery that gets into operation? If the minister says it is not an offer could he indicate, after it is publicized, how it comes to his attention? Has he seen it? Perhaps he has not seen it. Last week the opposition made reference to the fact that they had seen it.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I must point out that this has nothing to do with the matters now under consideration. All we are dealing with here is the matter of an amendment to certain items in the tariff, simply renumbering some of them. This matter that the hon. member wishes to raise can be raised on some other occasion, under the proper circumstances, but it has no application to the matter now before us.

Mr. Benidickson: You will recall, Mr. Chairman, that some explanation was made by the minister in connection with this particular procedure on the part of one of our partners in the GATT trade agreement. Surely if the minister puts on the record one side of the story, from then on it is open to other members of this committee to discuss the item.

The Chairman: If, as the minister points out, it is only a question of renumbering the items, it seems to me that at this point there could hardly be any relevant discussion.

Mr. Benidickson: Then could I assert that the minister was out of order in making the extensive remarks he did about the procedures under GATT in so far as our trading partner, the United States, was concerned?

The Chairman: If I understand correctly, at this point we are dealing with part II of Schedule A.

Mr. Winch: May I ask the minister a question. At least half a dozen times he has stated that things which are not covered by the bill before us can be raised on some other occasion. He always uses that phrase "some other occasion". There are two matters not covered here which I should like to