

in another. Decisions to impose economic sanctions will involve a complex balancing of many considerations. The kinds of measures to be taken, their likely effectiveness and their potential cost to Canadians will need to be addressed every time a proposal is made to impose sanctions. Consequently, Bill C-53 does not dictate the policy considerations that would determine whether or not to apply sanctions in any particular situation, nor does it dictate the types of measures to be used when the government decides to apply sanctions.

The flexibility that must be granted to the government in Bill C-53 warrants parliamentary scrutiny. In applying sanctions, as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait demonstrated, the government must be able to act quickly. However, once the government has acted, every order and regulation made in application of sanctions must be laid before each House of Parliament within five sitting days of its making. If 50 Members or 20 Senators move that any order or regulation be revoked, the motion must be debated and brought to a vote.

When Canada applies economic sanctions, every effort must be made to minimize the cost to Canada's business community and to Canadian workers. Where possible, restrictions should be applied in a prospective manner, thereby permitting the execution of existing contracts. Where costs to Canadians are unavoidable, existing government programs might be adapted to assist those in Canada who bear the burden. This was done in 1980 when the existing grain price support programs were used to relieve farmers affected by depressed cereal prices that resulted from Canadian participation in the grain embargo against the Soviet Union. In the Canadian experience with the application of economic sanctions, there has been little call for direct compensation. Nonetheless, we do not exclude the possibility that, in certain circumstances, the government might want to consider the need for a program of compensation for Canadians and persons in Canada adversely affected by the application of economic sanctions. Section 6 of the Bill provides for that eventuality.

Bill C-53 is timely legislation that responds to changes in international circumstances. It reflects changes in the character of international business. The Special Economic Measures Act will fit within long-standing Canadian policy that seeks multilateral solutions to international problems. And, it will be a valuable addition to the peaceful options available to the government to respond to threats to international peace and security.

I hope that all honourable Members will see the value of this important legislation and allow for quick passage so that additional options can be considered for addressing effectively the Haitian situation in particular. It is of most immediate concern, but, of course, to others in the future.

Thank you.