

*Textile and Clothing Board Act*

190,000 Canadians, that is 6 per cent of our national labour force.

In the province of Quebec, 55,000 people derive their livelihood from the textile industry.

**Mr. Pepin:** Textile and clothing.

**Mr. Ricard:** And clothing, I stand corrected. I should have been more explicit.

Three thousand six hundred manufacturers are engaged in the production of textile and clothing, worth more than \$100,800,000. This industry is 80 per cent Canadian. Would it be for this reason alone, it matters that a particular effort be made, so as to preserve this industry, since it is owned, in a ratio of 80 per cent, by Canadians.

This industry spends every year more than \$100 million in capital investment.

One sector of this industry, which emerged recently, has showed its ability to meet the requirements of the market, and here I refer to the production of rugs.

In 1959 this sector of industry provided only 1,700 jobs. In 1969 it employed over 5,000 workers.

Sixty per cent of textile manufacturing firms are in the province of Quebec. This means that this industry assumes a primary importance in the economy of the province.

Mr. Speaker, what is the origin of the present difficulties in the textile industry? They are caused almost solely by imports from countries where salaries are substantially lower than in Canada. We have known that for long; the hon. minister recognized it himself only a few months ago when he came before the House to ask us to extend the surtax on shirts. This is why I am convinced that the minister has already on hand all necessary statistics and data so that there is no point in setting up a board to study the difficulties of the textile industry, a move which would only delay further adequate action in this field. Meanwhile, other firms will have to close down and more Canadian workers will lose their jobs. In the end, who will be the losers? All of us Canadians!

**Mr. Pepin:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the hon. member to permit me a remark to clarify somewhat this situation?

We do not propose to set up a board of inquiry into the textile industry. The inquiry has already been carried out. The hon. member is perfectly right in saying that we already know everything there is to know about the industry. This Board will study special matters, for instance, cotton yarns so as to recommend the degree of protection essential to the survival of a viable sector—

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for St. Hyacinthe (Mr. Ricard) has the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, the minister has just made a remark concerning cotton yarns. It is also a well-known

[Mr. Ricard.]

fact that cotton yarns from Japan enter this country at least 10 cents a lb. cheaper than their eventual cost here, on account of lower salaries paid over there. Why then should an inquiry be conducted? Why should a board be instructed to proceed with such an inquiry when we already know that cotton yarns imported from Japan and other cheap labour countries enter the Canadian market at a price with which we cannot compete due to the higher salaries paid to our Canadian workers?

From 1954...

**Mr. Boulanger:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is mistaken, for there is no labour in Japan; all processes are automated.

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Mercier can make his speech later if he wants to.

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Would the hon. member allow a question for clarification?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ricard:** As for questions, Mr. Speaker, I will answer them when I have finished my remarks. I am aware of the tactics of the government members; they are trying to distract me and to make me lose the thread of my ideas.

[*English*]

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) is rising on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the fact mentioned by the hon. member a moment ago when he referred to Japan. He spoke about labour. I would like to draw his attention to the fact—

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Would the hon. member please resume his seat? I understand that the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe would like to complete his remarks, and he has the floor.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, I listened very attentively and respectfully to the two ministers' statements and I should like the same consideration to be extended to me.

From 1954 to 1967 Mr. Speaker, there was a 146 per cent increase in textile and clothing imports, most of which came from countries where labour is much cheaper than here, like Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and others.

From 1966 to 1968, the textile industry experienced a decrease of about 4,000 in its labour force. If we