

*Softwood Lumber Products*

that by fawning to the American President he could ingratiate himself. He tried to dissociate himself with past policies of the Canadian Government which were there in place to defend our independence. The Government has taken a step to try to eliminate our protection of our resources in energy through the elimination of certain efforts to give ourselves a reserve through the National Energy Program. The Prime Minister has eliminated our control over our economy through FIRA by eliminating FIRA and thus allowing investments in Canada that are not as much in the interests of our country as otherwise would have been.

• (1140)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) reversed the Liberal policy of standing our ground against Americans on offshore sovereignty, in world courts and with independent foreign policy. I suggest that we are in grave danger. The Prime Minister has now found that his efforts to appease the Americans have brought only contempt and disinterest.

The Prime Minister's policy of appeasement has been recognized and now Canada is seen by Americans for what it is, a country stumbling while being led by a well meaning group of incompetents. The recent deal struck on softwood lumber with the United States is a most pathetic example of this. It is a case of confusion, bravado and posturing followed by exposure of the bluff. For Canada, it is a defeat and a disaster.

I would hope that after the Prime Minister's meeting with the American Vice-President, and after he learns of the mood of the country, the Government will reconsider this agreement, go back to the negotiating table and, if necessary, throw this agreement out and begin by appealing to the ITA, the ITC and GATT. I hope the Government seeks for Canada a just solution. We have not done anything unfair to the Americans and we should stand our ground and be courageous enough to say that this is where we stand, we are not cowards.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River (Mr. Parry).

**Mr. McDermid:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If you check yesterday's records, Mr. Speaker, you will find that the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) spoke, followed by the Hon. Member for Eglinton—Lawrence (Mr. de Corneille). I believe you will find that it is the Government's turn to have the floor.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the Hon. Member for the intervention. I regret that I did not see the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mrs. Collins) rise. I am sure the Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River (Mr. Parry) will understand that we do follow the roster.

**Mrs. Collins:** Mr. Speaker, I know that that is one of the difficulties of Hon. Members who sit on the back-bench. They are not quite as noticeable to the Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** I may not have recognized the Hon. Member but I always see her.

**Mrs. Mary Collins (Capilano):** Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in participating in this debate. However, quite honestly, I must say that I have never heard such an erroneous twisting of facts as I have heard from Members on the other side of the House. I have never heard such outrageous indignation as I have heard from Hon. Members opposite who have spoken on this Bill.

I would like to talk about some of the facts pertaining to this issue. I have been trying to figure out what is really concerning opposition Members about this particular measure. I thought it might be the plight of the forest workers. I had a chance to look back on the record of six months ago when we were faced with the 35 per cent tariff on shakes and shingles. At that time we heard the Hon. Member for Saint-Henri—Westmount (Mr. Johnston) predict that this particular measure would put thousands of jobs in jeopardy. The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) called it an incredible decision which would sacrifice some 4,000 jobs in British Columbia. The Liberal House Leader, the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray), upped the ante again and said that it would put at risk at least 10,000 direct and indirect jobs in the province. That was the scary stuff that was spread across Canada.

What is the reality? Six months later we know that 80 per cent of that industry is operating at full capacity. My colleague, the Hon. Member for Mission—Port Moody (Mr. St. Germain), who represents a constituency in which many of those plants are located, found that there was not the disruptive influence that had been predicted.

Quite honestly, the record on credibility of Members opposite was not very good on that issue, nor is it on this one. Again, we have heard during this debate wailing and lamenting about the thousands of jobs that will be lost because of this horrendous imposition of a 15 per cent export tax. What is the reality? The best source to which we can turn is the unions themselves. One would expect that the unions would be upset if what opposition Members have been saying were true. Certainly the unions would be the first to verify that. Instead, the reality is this. On January 5, a few days after the agreement was reached, the Western Canadian Regional Council of the International Woodworkers of America had this to say:

During the past few days, the softwood lumber settlement has been severely criticized on both political and economic grounds. We would suggest that many negative comments have been both ill-informed and ill-founded. All seem to be based on the assumption that somehow the 15 per cent duty could have been substantially reduced if a negotiated settlement had not been entered into. That is simply untrue.

Opposition Members have said that if we had stood our ground things would have been different. We know that that is untrue, and they know that that is untrue. Why do we not all face up to reality?