

Softwood Lumber Products Export Charge Act

For my own satisfaction and for the information of the House and Hon. Members, I made a quick survey of Members who might be affected. I found out that even the Minister from Blainville—Deux-Montagnes (Mrs. Landry) is affected. Her riding has a number of industries that belong to the Lumber Manufacturers Association, and if I remember correctly, Blainville and Sainte-Thérèse are in her riding.

I realized that the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Bouchard), the Hon. Member for Roberval, would be severely affected, because 25 per cent of the jobs are in his riding. I see that the Hon. Member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Vincent) is very much affected. I noticed that the Hon. Member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead (Mr. Gérin) is affected.

To my surprise, when I was looking at the list of members of the Quebec lumber industry, high up on the list I found a large number of small-and medium-sized businesses in Quebec. We all know the Beauce region. We all know that Beauce is an area that is on the move. It is one of Quebec's dynamic growth areas. We know that. However, Madam Speaker, I don't think the Hon. Member for Beauce (Mr. Bernier) seems to realize—I hope he knows his riding better than I do—how many industries and small- and medium-sized businesses are directly affected by this agreement, and there are quite a few if we take a close look at the *Quebec Lumber Industry*, their advertising and if we consider the meeting we had with officers of the Association.

I see that the Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) is directly affected by this agreement. Personally, I am a pragmatist, I'm not an ideologue. I am very down to earth, which is probably why I always identify with the Liberal Party. I think we should go back to the source of the problems that will arise in this vast enterprise in which the Right Hon. Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) would like to see us involved, this great trade agreement.

Madam Speaker, I am very concerned, and I could go on. I also found that the Hon. Member for Lévis (Mr. Fontaine) is very much affected. There are so many. I could name them all, and if anyone cares to consult this document, the *Quebec Lumber Industry*, they will find the names of a great many companies in their own ridings. In fact, we intend to write to them to get them moving and on to their Members to tell them: Listen guys and gals, do something because this is getting too close to home. These are all small businesses.

Madam Speaker, in Canada it has often been our experience that when large agreements are signed, people say it doesn't affect them, it isn't serious. However, I may recall the size of the small- and medium-sized business sector in Quebec. Now, this Government wants to sign an agreement covering a specific sector within the trade agreement with the U.S. at any price. Our partner within this vast agreement is the friendly giant next door, I said friendly, and I know the Right Hon. former Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) always says not to attack the United States frivolously. I could not agree more, but our great big

friendly neighbour takes giant steps and when he takes one step he crushes everything in his path. And why not, since they are more powerful than we are. Madam Speaker, let us have no illusions about making the U.S. Government back-track should its interests clash with ours. What we want to do and what we shall do in the weeks, the months and the year to come is draw the attention of Canadians to the daily dangers inherent not in the overall agreement which will not be signed until the very last but in all those smaller intermediate agreements that with a single signature may wipe out all or part of our small- and medium-sized businesses.

And we have not mentioned all the other possibilities. What will happen next? What will my good friends and colleagues and I hope friends and colleagues of the Government of Quebec say if a U.S. senator or several U.S. senators or members of Congress should decide that all this hydro-electric power from Quebec is unfair competition, and we have another Minister scurrying to Washington? I hope this time they will not be vacationing in Hawaii. If I mention this, it may be because we have heard so much about it or because we are envious not to have been there ourselves. But that's beside the point. The question remains: What will happen? I will conclude, Madam Speaker, because I always obey the Chair. I conclude by asking: What will it be? What will our attitude be the next time if the same thing happens in other major areas such as the sale of our electric power resources which is so beneficial to Quebec? The same thing will happen, because the Americans will have the same fear. With the Americans, we should be constantly on the look-out. I suggest, Madam Speaker, that the Government was not on the look-out when it signed this agreement. If we are continuing this debate now, it is to emphasize that the Government did not exercise the expected cautiousness, and there will be Hon. Members taking part in this debate as long as the Government does not assure us that it will be constantly on the look-out from now on. I thank you for your patience.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Madam Speaker, I too should like to make a few comments on the very important matter now under consideration in the House, namely Bill C-37 on Canadian softwood lumber and the 15 per cent tax on the export of certain softwood lumber products to the United States. It is an important question with respect to Canada's sovereignty, just as it is an important question with respect to the relations between Canada and the United States, and between Ottawa and the ten Canadian provinces.

Madam Speaker, the softwood lumber industry is very important because thousands of people work directly or indirectly in this industry in most Canadian provinces. As far as I and many more people are concerned, the free trade issue and the free trade negotiations between our country and the United States are also very important, as they are to the chief negotiators of the two countries, to the Secretary of State for External Affairs who is in the House today, and to our chief negotiator, Mr. Simon Reisman. I spent a lot of time in my riding during the Christmas recess and I know that many of