

Supply

We know the Premier of British Columbia was not surprised. He wrote the Prime Minister 20 days ago. We know the Prime Minister's own advisor on the International Trade Committee who gives advice to the Minister of Trade was not surprised. We know that the industry in British Columbia was not surprised. We know by looking at newspaper clippings going back over a month that the journalists were not surprised.

Why is it that the Prime Minister was shocked? Why was he surprised? We know the Prime Minister has a very bad memory, we all know that. He was in New York a few weeks ago telling the editorial board of *The New York Times* that when he heard about the tuna scandal, bang, the Minister of Fisheries was fired. Then he had to come back to Canada and be reminded that the Minister of Fisheries hung around for a few weeks. In fact, the Prime Minister himself defended him in this House.

Canada needs a Prime Minister and an administration that will speak to us from their hearts, their minds and from their sense of commitment, not from a Hollywood script. The photo opportunity Prime Ministerial stance that we have seen is too damned costly for this country. We cannot afford it.

The Liberal Party has put forward a position. We believe the Prime Minister ought to examine it, but all we got today from the Prime Minister was flippant answers. We are not calling upon the Prime Minister to get out his megaphone. We are not looking for megaphone diplomacy. We are not asking for the Prime Minister to beat his chest and call the President names. Quite frankly, it may make the Prime Minister feel better but it really doesn't do a lot for those 20,000 people who are wondering whether they will have a job next week. We have asked the Prime Minister to pick up the telephone to call the U.S. President. So far, either since he got this letter May 7 or since the tariff was imposed last Thursday, the Prime Minister has admitted today that he has not done that. He sent a telex to his good personal friend, Ronald Reagan. He is waiting for a reply to the telex. We have asked him to make a phone call to ask the President to reverse the tariff. That is the first thing we have asked for. Second, we have asked him during the course of that telephone call to get a commitment from the President that he will refuse the petition for a 27 per cent tariff on the softwood lumber industry, that that secondary action on a \$3 billion industry over and above the action on a \$250 million industry will not be allowed to go ahead. We have asked him to get an agreement from the President that if free trade negotiations are to proceed, that there be agreement on both sides that both countries will cease and desist from these kinds of tariff measures during the course of those negotiations.

We have said to the Prime Minister that failure to get those kinds of assurances from the President should then result at that point in a decision by the Government of Canada to reassess our involvement in free trade talks. At that point we must ask ourselves whether we are talking to tariff walls

instead of talking to men of like mind and like ambition who want to have a fair trading system between our countries.

• (1520)

We have also told the Prime Minister that, despite the threats of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) yesterday, until that phone call is made we must not get involved in knee-jerk retaliation measures. To do that on cedar shakes and shingles at this stage, without ever having talked to the President, is to put at even greater risk a \$3 billion softwood lumber industry.

That has been the position of the Liberal Party. It has not been our position to measure the Prime Minister by how hard he beats his chest. It has not been our position to measure the Prime Minister's performance by how loud he shouts. It has not been our position to measure the Prime Minister's response and competence by the names he dreams up to call the President. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has called him erratic and eccentric, and the Prime Minister has called him bizarre. It has been our position that those things may make the Prime Minister feel better, but that they do nothing for the people in British Columbia who may lose their jobs, and that they do not put bread and butter on the table.

The Prime Minister made sure that he did the right PR things to get himself on the front page of *The Globe and Mail* and in front of television cameras to beat his chest. However, he admitted today that since last Thursday he has not made a phone call to the President of the United States. He admitted today that he ignored the letter of the Premier of British Columbia, who saw this coming 20 days ago, and has not made one phone call.

The people in the forestry industry in British Columbia are not really interested in the rhetoric which crosses the aisle of the House of Commons. They are not really interested in whether cheap political points are scored. They are not interested in chest-beating or in hollow threats which emanate uselessly like the sounds of a hollow drum. They are interested in a Prime Minister who will go to the heart of the U.S. administration and express, on behalf of all Canadians, our sense of outrage and betrayal and our commitment not to allow our fellow Canadians in British Columbia stand alone during this time of need.

Mr. O'Neil: Mr. Speaker, I have observed the continuing flip-flop of the Official Opposition on the important issue of a trade agreement with the United States. If anything, this whole lumber issue highlights how correct we were during the last number of months to pursue friendly relations with the United States and how important it has been and will be for us to maintain communications. The Government has been strongly criticized by the Official Opposition for its overtures to the United States in its efforts to conclude a trade agreement. The Government has been accused of selling out to the United States. Now the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner) has contradicted the Liberal critic who spoke on Friday. They now say that we must continue to negotiate. If