

*Oral Questions*

straight face. Anyone who uses arguments like these must be really short of ammunition to defend his case. In any event, I am very happy to see that the Leader of the New Democratic Party found out that today was International Women's Day. I may remind the Hon. Member that the Government concerned itself with the status of women well before the Hon. Member started to take an interest in the problem, and that the policies implemented by this Government during the last fifteen years with respect to the status of women are innovative policies that compare favourably with those developed by any other country in the world. I would ask my hon. colleague to look at any other country in the world, including those being governed by a socialist government. He will realize that the Government of Canada is definitely in the forefront as far as the status of women is concerned.

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[English]

**TRADE**

## UNITED STATES DECISION ON CANADIAN LUMBER EXPORTS

**Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre):** Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister responsible for International Trade. The Minister will join with hundreds of thousands of Canadians who work in our forest industry who are relieved to learn that the United States does not plan on levying countervailing duties on our lumber exports to the U.S. However, as he knows, today's decision is an interim ruling only, and it can be appealed and possibly reversed when the final decision comes down in May. What assurances can he give the House that the Government will pursue every effort and every avenue to ensure that duties will not be imposed and Canadian jobs lost?

**Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)):** Madam Speaker, certainly the news we had from the United States today is of the best possible quality. I thought for a moment that the Hon. Member was going to try to make bad news out of it.

What has happened is that the U.S. Department of Commerce has made a preliminary finding that there are no subsidies on the export of Canadian softwood products to the U.S. market. Those exports have a value of more than \$2 billion, and until we found other markets at least 40,000 jobs would have been lost in this country if the U.S. had decided to levy countervailing duties.

I am very happy about the fact that the provincial Governments, the industry, and the Government of Canada worked closely together to see that the claims were fully rebutted. I think the decision today is a great victory for that co-operation. It is true that it is a preliminary finding, but the process that leads to a final determination on May 23 is merely one of verifying the accuracy of the facts placed before the U.S. officials. So I am extremely confident that we are well on the way to a final victory in this matter.

May I also say to the Hon. Member, through you, Madam Speaker, that the reason she can be confident about the future is the fact that the Governments involved have worked together with the industry, without politics playing any part, to see to it that the Canadian interest was protected.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Miss Carney:** Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the Minister that, when it comes to economic policy, our Party does not have to make bad news; his Government is quite able to do that itself.

## REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF GRANTS

**Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre):** Madam Speaker, the Minister is ignoring the fact that there are hearings scheduled on April 14, he is ignoring the fact that there are teams of U.S. investigators who will come to Canada to confer with the industry about this finding, and he is ignoring the fact that there could be some reversal of this ruling. Will the Government act to remove those irritants which do exist, specifically some of the DREE grants and loan programs which were found to be a form of subsidy, and thereby remove any basis of appeal by U.S. lumber interests?

**Mr. Cullen:** You are being very helpful.

**Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of State (International Trade)):** Madam Speaker, I think the Hon. Member shows a lack of understanding of the process and what is involved here. First of all, while the finding was that there was an insignificant amount of subsidy in the existence of some tax advantages and DREE grants, these were not at a level sufficient to warrant a countervailing duty. I would hardly see a very strong argument for doing away with something which is not in breach of the American regulations, if it results in creating Canadian jobs.

**Mr. Lalonde:** Typical Tory.

**Mr. Regan:** The Hon. Member does not realize that the fact that this finding has been made is an indication that the U.S. Government has withstood political pressures and made a proper factual finding, which is a good indication of the fact that we have the best relations with the United States we have had in a long time.

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[Translation]

**FINANCE**

## STATUS OF FEDERAL AGREEMENT ON ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is addressed to the Minister of Finance and concerns the status of the federal agreement on established programs. Today's newspapers