

Surely, that is unreasonable for 1,000 employees who have had little over a week's notice of the lay-off.

Equally important is the question of funding for training and retraining, job search, mobility and community adjustment because the impact is not only on those industrial workers but equally on those people in the service sector.

• (1720)

We are facing the most cataclysmic turnaround in industrial job unemployment that I can recall. I think it is worse than the 1981-82 recession. Clearly, we are coming at it from a much lower base in terms of job situations. In the 1981-82 period, of the 83 megaprojects across Canada, five of those were located in my constituency at that time. We have no megaprojects, we only have lay-offs and a desperate situation. The same situation applies in Sault Ste. Marie where we have had very significant lay-offs. We have a steel industry there which, as the whole steel industry in this country, is in a very desperate, sick situation.

Much of that is due to the government's economic and fiscal policy. You simply cannot compete in the United States market with the level of interest rates 5 per cent above the United States and a dollar at 87 or 86 cents. On top of that, in the free trade deal the people in the steel industry in Canada, whether it is Dofasco or Stelco or Algoma, all believe that they would be relieved of the threat and the problems of countervail. In fact, that has not happened.

Since 1989, we have had countervail imposed on steel rails. We have had countervail duties imposed on seamless tube pipes. It has made them unsaleable in the United States and that, combined with the high dollar, has just had a devastating impact on that industry. The entire industry is facing collapse, certainly at Algoma. This is mostly due to the government's policy and the broken promises of the FTA.

This resolution today really pin-points the folly of the government's policies: the fiscal, monetary, trade and tax policies. It is having a drastic and devastating impact on our industry and business in this country, but, most important, on the workers of this nation, the 1.4 million who are facing unemployment, loss of jobs and no retraining programs.

### *Supply*

I think it is a desperate situation. It is one that requires action by this government and one which the budget does not address. It simply exacerbates the situation because it calls on provincial governments and municipal governments to pay higher taxes, increasing the adverse economic impact on the entire nation.

**Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon):** Mr. Speaker, I compliment my colleague from Algoma for bringing to the attention of this House the dilemma in which all of us in northern Ontario find ourselves.

I have sat on several committees with my colleague over the last several months where we have discussed those areas of the economy in Ontario that are truly affected, especially the area from which he comes. What I am talking about in particular is the softwood lumber industry. He has had several mills close in that area, as he has relayed in his speech to the House.

I would ask the member to relate what he saw happening, firsthand: the anguish and pain of individuals in the community, because of the families involved, the lack of work and without the proper training to go to another job even if there was another job to go to, in the softwood lumber industry. Could he tell us also about the terrible anguish that the community of Sault Ste. Marie is now facing because of the potential closure of its largest employer, something that would destroy not only 8,000 primary jobs in an industry that has been so vital to the future in the community of Sault Ste. Marie. Could he relate to us, in this House, the personal anguish and the personal pain that each family is experiencing because of this terrible economic policy that is affecting all of us in the north but, particularly, in Sault Ste. Marie and the district of Algoma of which we look upon in Thunder Bay—Nipigon as being part of our area.

**Mr. Foster:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. friend and colleague from Thunder Bay—Nipigon for his question regarding the softwood lumber industry. It is an area that is common to both of us, although clearly in his community they have one of the largest softwood conglomerates in the entire area of northern Ontario.

The presentation that was made to our task force on the northern Ontario economy in Thunder Bay by a representative of the Buchanan Group perhaps was one