

Supply

We, as Members, also have a duty now to do all possible to assist our industry in presenting a strong and unified case to the U.S. Department of Commerce. We also have a duty to explain to our constituents what is taking place and not to cause undue concern and panic by making irresponsible statements and using inaccurate and inflammatory rhetoric in the House of Commons.

I think the Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton) raised a good point when he asked to have a government study undertaken to try to ascertain what damage would be done if and when a tariff is exacted on our lumber exports. We heard some very incorrect and inflammatory statements in the House of Commons no later than in Question Period today when the Member for London West (Mr. Hockin) stated that we will lose 100,000 jobs in Canada. A study done recently by Peter Pearse, a well respected professor of forestry at U.B.C., indicates that there would be much less damage than that done. I do not want to leave the impression that this is not an extremely important issue and that we are not going to lose a good many jobs, but I would ask Hon. Members not to use figures which they pluck out of the air, because that can have a very serious effect on people in the industry and people whose jobs depend on the industry.

As Chairman of the B.C. Conservative caucus I am convinced that the Government is handling the issue well. I have been at daily briefing sessions with the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and I would like to compliment the right hon. gentleman for the grasp he has of this issue and the confidence which he is giving to me, my caucus and the rest of the country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Are there any questions or comments? There being no questions or comments, I will recognize the Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River (Mr. Parry).

Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be able to rise in the House today to address this Opposition Day motion on the question of the cedar shake and shingle industry, the softwood lumber industry, and the action that the Government has or has not taken in the face of the evident threat to Canadian jobs and Canadian industry which is posed by the current trade situation. Already years ago this was flagged as a matter of concern for Canadians and a matter on which the Government should be taking action.

Before I review the record of the action which the Government has and has not taken, I would like to say that the motion as tabled is straightforward and easily debatable. However, it is also somewhat deficient in that it does not really attempt to give the Government much guidance or to press a course of action on the Government which we could really dignify with the description of a substantive course of action. After all, the measures that are mentioned in the motion tend to be on the level of apple pie. They are predictable things that any Government in this country, regardless of its ideological composition, could and should, indeed, be doing. Later in my

speech I will get into how we in the New Democratic Party would like to see this motion toughened up and how we would like to see the motion amended to provide some real instruction to the Government rather than the somewhat loose and limp direction which the motion in its present form gives.

• (1650)

Let none of us doubt that we are at a serious point in Canada's economic history. We are at a point when one of our major export industries, indeed, in many ways our major export industry, built up over a period of time through favourable economic and favourable demand circumstances from our southern neighbour, is now at a crossroads at which this industry could be drastically cut back.

I think I would take very well the caution of the Hon. Member for Cariboo—Chilcotin (Mr. Greenaway) and note that he applied it as much to his own colleagues in the Progressive Conservative Party as to anybody else in this House when he talked of not overemphasizing the number of jobs that would be lost.

Well, the figure of 100,000 that his colleague from London West used may, indeed, be overemphasized when we talk in terms of direct job loss within this industry.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Cariboo—Chilcotin (Mr. Greenaway) rises on a point of order.

Mr. Greenaway: I meant the Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray). I made a mistake and I would like it to go on the record that it was the Member for Windsor West that made that statement, not London West.

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, indeed, I myself did not hear the Member for London West (Mr. Hockin) make any such statement. I was proceeding on the authority of the Hon. Member. I am very glad we have the record corrected.

In terms of direct job loss, I would not doubt that the direct job loss in the forest industry from the presumed countervail action by the United States would be less than 100,000. I would caution the Hon. Member, and I would certainly caution our economic planners, that when we take into account the indirect job losses, and when we take into account the multiplier effect of any job lost through the economy, I have to say that it may indeed be possible that many Canadians will lose their jobs. If that does come to pass, it is going to be a tragedy. It will be a tragedy, I think, as the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis) said last month when we were debating the rescission of existing countervail duties. It is going to be a tragedy that will be felt in pockets across this country where the impact will be very hard. Indeed, the impact will be brutal.

He characterized it as an issue which will affect the hinterland more than the heartland. I think that was accurate, because we have already seen the impact that has been coming in British Columbia as a result of the Draconian level of duty that was imposed as a countervail on shakes and shingles.