

*Softwood Lumber*

government because it has its free trade blinders on to any particular issue like this.

Domestically, while the Conservatives talk the good fight, talk about how they are going to take this to the wall, what does the government do? It continues to encourage a domestic policy of a high dollar that is killing our exports to the United States and is adding to the problems. The government would appear to be putting all of its eggs in the free trade basket. It is pretty clear that is what it is hinging this whole thing on, and let us hope so. For all those people who are dependent on the jobs in the forest industry, we are going to have to hope and pray for something a lot more than what this government has been able to offer so far. Let us take a look at a couple of the concerns and at some of the opportunities that could have been used or should be used. I refer members to an article in the March 8 edition of *The Toronto Star* that reviewed the concerns over the dispute settlement mechanism and some of the advantages. In this case Mr. David Crane argued why we could use an existing mechanism and why it would be better. With regard to the dispute settlement mechanism he wrote about the scope of the panel, if it is ever established. Not to be an alarmist, an article by Mr. Ritchie makes reference to U.S. officials suggesting that they may refuse to be bound by the decision of the bi-national panel. As one person suggested, it is like having an ugly, vicious dog just sitting there and waiting. They are saying: "If you do not do what we say, come to the table and sell out to us like you did in 1986, we are going to sick this ugly dog on you and you are never going to get your so-called favourite dispute settlement mechanism and resolve this problem".

The scope of the dispute settlement mechanism has been mentioned before. The concern is that the main purpose of the panel would be to determine whether the United States has properly applied its own trade law against Canada. It would not conduct a new investigation. Under GATT it is talking about a faster and quicker decision, one that judges disputes on the basis of the rights and obligations of member countries under the GATT system, not on the basis of any one country's law.

We have to continue our fight at GATT. Our leader has already said that the message to the United States should be that we are out of the NAFTA talks. We have to give a message to Washington, D.C. that we are not going to roll over and play dead on this particular issue.

Through debates in Parliament we have to keep pressure on our own government so that it does not repeat the sellout of 1986. Our forest communities and workers depend on it. People who work in communities like Prince George, Robson Valley, Fort St. James, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake and Houston want the government to fight it all the way. They do not want fine words. They want a government that is going to stand up for Canada, that is going to fight for the interests of our forests, and keep up the fight for the sovereignty of our forests.

**Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on behalf of the government tonight in this very important debate. I would like first of all, if I could, to extend my congratulations to the Minister of Forestry and the member for Prince George—Peace River for his masterful summary of what has taken us to this situation, his analysis of it, and his explanation of our options and of our strategy. The masterful address he gave should be printed and sent to all these Americans who are harassing us, as well as sent to the members of the opposition who should read it carefully because in there are the kind of facts that the opposition would benefit from reading.

I am speaking on behalf of the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade tonight because of the importance of this program from the point of view of our over-all industrial structure and indeed our trade performance.

I want to make a couple of preliminary comments and just centre my remarks primarily on a key facet of the American complaint, that is their objection to our lack of exports of raw logs. This apparently is a large part of what they call their countervailable case, and I want to centre my comments on it.

Before I get to it I really should remind the House, especially when I listened to the Liberal Party talking a few minutes ago, that when the MOU was signed in 1986