

Supply

Watching the Minister's performance today in the House, watching him explain to Members that there was no deal done, there was no selling out of the cedar shakes and shingle industry, there was no selling out of the softwood lumber industry—as evidenced by the comments this morning in *The Citizen* by the senior trade adviser to the U.S. Senate—watching him try to make the case that all of that is not so when 4,000 jobs are already about to go down the tubes, the toilet has been flushed, the water is rushing about and people are being affected even today in cedar shakes and shingles, reminds me of the poor young fellow in the school yard whose knees are scuffed out of his pants, whose lip is split and eye blackened but who says that he is not hurt. He says: "I am not hurt. I stood my ground and never felt a thing." The poor young fellow says he never felt a thing and is not hurt, because to admit that he is hurt is to admit that his pride has been damaged. The Minister, like the poor young fellow in the school yard or, unfortunately, like Shawn O'Sullivan in the third round on the weekend, with his arms by his side and unable to respond or block a punch any longer, says: "I am still in good shape. I do not know why they stopped the fight." It is a sad day when one tries to understand the policy of this administration with respect to such an important bilateral issue, and can only conure up the image of the young fellow in the school yard or the boxer in the third round who no longer knows in what round he is but says: "I'm okay, he never landed a punch."

● (1230)

In case the Minister has not understood this yet, let me tell him that whether he recognizes from his position in the ring that a punch has been landed, whether he recognizes that his knees are wobbling and he is seeing double from a devastating blow, or whether he recognizes from his position in the ring that the gong has been sounded and we have lost another round, the 4,000 workers in the shakes and shingles industry in British Columbia know that they have been hit hard. I can also tell him that the people involved in the softwood lumber industry are looking up to that ring and are watching that brutal blow being delivered by the opponent which, in this case, is the American administration that sold us out to get the extra votes in the Senate Finance Committee for the free trade talks. Those people in the softwood lumber industry are pretty damn nervous about getting into that ring because they have a sense that the fix is in with this particular bout. They have a sense that Canada is about to take a fall because it is a rigged fight.

The Minister takes the naive view that since we won the 1983 softwood lumber petition hands down, in 1986 we will win again. He says this in the face of a letter written on May 8 by the President of the United States to Senator Packwood of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, who delivered the necessary votes to proceed with free trade talks. It is a letter indicating to Senator Packwood that the President will solve the softwood lumber question one way or another. The President told the Minister that either the International Trade Commission will look after the problem or, in the unlikely

event that Canada wins, since the fix is in, he will look after the problem anyway.

The senior U.S. Senate trade adviser pointed out in the *Ottawa Citizen* this morning that the President has the power to impose duties unilaterally if he finds that a foreign practice unfairly or unreasonably hurts U.S. industry. If you want a new definition of "fixed", Mr. Speaker, we can use the analogy of the fight again and state that even in the event that the big burly opponent does not land a blow, it does not matter because Canada's softwood lumber industry will take a fall anyway. That is what the senior trade adviser to the U.S. Senate is saying.

Yet today, we have seen the spectacle of the Minister wobbling about on his legs, dazed and confused, saying that they have not landed a blow. The situation conjures up the image of the fighter, but the only problem in this place, Mr. Speaker, unless you decide to take unprecedented action, is that we do not have a referee to step in and pull the Minister out of the ring in order for him to come to his senses.

Last Thursday, myself, a Government Member, the Member for Mission—Port Moody (Mr. St. Germain), and an NDP member, the Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton), were in Washington at the invitation of the Minister. I appreciated that invitation and went down to Washington last Tuesday to sit in on a briefing session with Canada's fine Ambassador, Ambassador Gotlieb, who does a very good job. We were to be briefed before the Ambassador went to see Secretary Baldrige and we were to be debriefed after the meeting.

When I was told on Tuesday that I would have an opportunity to go to Washington I thought that while I did not know about the Government's intentions it obviously was organizing a significant and serious last minute representation to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Baldrige, to prevent the petition from proceeding. I considered this invitation by the Minister as a serious request, a departure from what I believed was a preoccupation with managing the public relations difficulties the Government is experiencing in Canada, rather than a preoccupation with dealing with the American administration, the American public and Congress. I thought that the Prime Minister had finally stopped worrying about trying to impress Canadians with all of his rhetoric that he was giving us only a few weeks ago and was prepared to let us go to talk to the Americans.

However, one can imagine the shattering experience it was for a young idealistic Member of Parliament like myself to discover that this much trumpeted and important last ditch effort turned out to be a shallow, pathetic public relations exercise. Three Members of Parliament left Ottawa without any briefing. We arrived in Washington but received no briefing in Washington other than that which we gave each other in the taxi from the airport to downtown Washington. We arrived at the hotel and spent six hours talking to each other because there was no briefing. We arrived at breakfast for a 20 minute *tête-à-tête* with Ambassador Gotlieb who told us that this was not really a political question but a quasi judicial question on which he was making Canada's argument. At that point, one begins to wonder why we were there.