

hungry, nasty, political face that we are looking at down there in terms of looking for ballots to go in boxes. The way we can stop it is by a highly mobilized—it may be very expensive but we have a couple of months to do it—good group of forestry representatives in every state in the United States; get them in Alaska as we do not need to worry about Hawaii right now. There are 49 states we have to deal with and only about a dozen that are very, very serious. It is the only way we can do it. It is an issue of penetration, it is a bilateral issue, and if we do not do something pretty soon our largest industry that now employs a million Canadians may very quickly become our smallest industry.

• (1150)

Mr. St. Germain: My greatest concern, and as the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton) knows, is that the issue we are addressing logically has to be first and foremost in the minds of all Canadians, but especially British Columbians. The thing that I question is that the Hon. Member has this concern and speaks of a balance and gaining the confidence of the Americans, but as a Member of Parliament from western Canada I feel we have to deal with the United States of America in a broader spectrum, and quit criticizing them. I am asking him why his Party and a lot of his Members who sit over there, as well as some of the Liberal Members like the Member from Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) are so critical of the Americans, criticizing them on every issue that they possibly can. I have run businesses and have never criticized my customers. These people are our best customers. I would like a short answer from the Hon. Member as to why they continue to knock the Americans when they need the Americans so badly?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): A very short answer.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Speaker, my view is that Canadians should never be a door mat to the United States. If you look, for example, at the boundary issues in my constituency you realize pretty quickly that the nicer we are the less we get. What have they ever done on acid rain? What have they ever done on toxic waste in Niagara? They do not do anything. If you do not legitimately criticize people you get nowhere.

Mr. St. Germain: There you go again criticizing. Sit down.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Debate.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber-Port au Port-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, in the midst of the echoes of the conflict across the floor of the House of Commons with respect to what our position should be, vis-a-vis the Americans, I would attempt to make a few comments on this motion today by the New Democratic Party in the name of the Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton). I said a moment ago that I supported the motion. I think all Members would support a motion recognizing the dire consequences faced by Canadian forest workers as a result of the pending legislation in the U.S. No matter what side of the House we sit on we would endorse a motion that would seek to draw the attention of the Members of the House,

Supply

indeed all Canadians, to the importance of that industry to workers in this country, a million people in all, directly and indirectly. I had not intended to address the matter raised by the Member opposite, but I cannot help but say a few words.

It seems to me that if Members of the Government are suggesting to Canadians that the way we do business with the United States is to take a position of simply echoing in every circumstance U.S. foreign policy, and therefore they will buy more lumber, then that is precisely the suggestion that has been made, that Canada sell her sovereignty, give it up totally in exchange for our ability to sell goods and services. I do not think many Members of the House, including Members on the government side would support that kind of approach to our relationship with the United States. It must be a relationship of mutual respect, mutual interest, and at times we must mutually agree to disagree. I do not think we can begin this debate by saying the reason we are having trouble with lumber is that we occasionally disagree with the U.S. position. I do not think Members in any of the Parties in the House would endorse that kind of position. That is not the debate here today.

The Government of Canada has been slow initially to recognize the seriousness of the situation we are seeing develop now in the U.S. Congress. They either have been slow to realize the seriousness of the degree to which U.S. legislators are prepared to go or, if they had recognized how serious the problem was they were slow to publicly acknowledge it. Whether or not they were slow, at this stage I think that as Members of Parliament we can say that all Members of the House on all sides, including Ministers of the Crown, recognize we have a problem.

As many as 75,000 jobs in Canada's lumber industry, primarily in British Columbia, are now in jeopardy. The assessment of the Member for Skeena is that as the snow melts and as the weather warms up we can expect to see a deep freeze placed on Canada's ability to export to the United States. That is a serious and sober assessment of what is happening south of the border. The Member has made an appropriate recommendation and suggestion to the Government. This may not be the most palatable comparison, but as a Newfoundlander I remember well the debate on the seal hunt. I remember well going to Europe with facts and figures. We left our hearts on the doorstep at home, left our emotions and went with a series of statistics about numbers, people's livelihood, the irrational trade view approach being taken by the EEC parliament and being confronted, after the committee meetings were over and we were having a glass of wine together over a meal, by European parliamentarians saying to us about the seals: We know you are right, we know that our Bill is irrational, we know the seal hunt is not in danger of extinction, but brother, my voters think it is. My voters are going to send me out of this place unless I vote to ban your seal hunt and the import of seal fur.

The same kind of situation occurs in the United States. I think we can go down as parliamentarians and engage in a discussion in that country with other legislators and we can set