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difficult for anyone, whether they are Government Members, Members of the Opposition, the media or the general public, to make sense of the Prime Minister's position when he does a summersault on a 24-hour cycle and changes his mind from day to day. We do not have a statesman for a Prime Minister, we have a gymnast who spends his time doing double fall-back summersaults every 24 hours. Furthermore, he is doing this on a vital issue and we are paying the price. That is why we have introduced this resolution. When this motion comes to a vote, we hope that we will have the support of Members on both sides of the House for a plan of action to deal with the trade issue.

On Friday, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), in the unctuous tone that only he can use, berated my colleague, the Hon. Member for Saint-Henri—Westmount (Mr. Johnston) and said that "this Government believes in action". Our resolution contains a prescription for dealing with this issue. Members opposite can vote in support of that prescription and therefore decide today what action they want to take. They can disregard the brave sounding words because we have put forward what we believe are a number of constructive proposals that would establish a more coherent approach to the existing trade problems. If Government Members vote against this resolution we will know that they are not really interested in action and that once again Canadians are simply being treated like a large field of mushrooms—being kept in the dark and having a lot of manure thrown on them. This resolution is an opportunity for those Members to show if they are prepared to reveal the whites and blues of their eyes.

During the past three weeks we have been arguing in the House that we want the Employment Support Act to be invoked right now and not at some time in the future, as the Secretary of State for External Affairs was musing about on the weekend. The fact is that workers are being laid off at this moment. Fortunately, a previous Government had the foresight to pass the Employment Support Act which is specifically designed to provide for assistance to those industries that are injured by unfair trade actions or import levies by other countries. What can be a more dramatic illustration of that than the American imposition of the tariff on shakes and shingles and a threatened imposition of a new tariff on the lumber industry?

It takes time to set the machinery of the Employment Support Act in motion. The Government must establish an employment support board. Precedent tells us that the Government has taken almost a year to get its advisory committees together. Therefore, the Government should begin appointing that board now so that there can be someone in place to accept applications from the industry in order that they can stay in business.

We know that this mechanism is effective. In 1971, when the Americans invoked a surcharge on import duties, the Employment Support Act was passed and some \$19 million was allocated. That meant that those industries affected by that surcharge could stay in business because that allocation of funds made up the difference between the import surcharge

and the cost of doing business. The shakes and shingles industry could stay in business today if that Employment Support Act had been invoked three weeks ago, the board established and a budget allocated, as we had asked. That industry could still be shipping its products this morning, but the Government is still delaying such a measure.

That is why this resolution is so important. It will put the full weight of the House behind the Government to invoke that Employment Support Act. We could also show the Americans that we mean business on the softwood lumber issue. By considering invoking the Employment Support Act with respect to the lumber industry as well as the shakes and shingle industry, we would very clearly tell the Americans that we will not be blackmailed out of business, intimidated or pushed aside. We will be saying that we are prepared to support our industry even though they may threaten the use of unfair and unequitable trade reactions.

I do not think there should be any argument in the House about the importance of using the Employment Support Act now and being able to announce tomorrow that the board has been established, a budget has been set and the industry can begin putting together its plans to use that employment support assistance. If the Secretary of State for External Affairs is really dedicated to what he says, then he should brook no delay. I do not think there is any argument in the House about the importance of considering how we can help our industry to fight the process that is taking place in the United States.

• (1120)

Last week in an interview given to *Canada A.M.*, Miss Paula Stern from the International Trade Commission said, and I want Hon. Members to pay attention, that it expects to be voting in the week of June 23, which is less than three weeks away, on a preliminary finding on injury in the softwood lumber industry. That is a timeframe of incredible concentration. It will take an overwhelming representation to put the argument and case before the ITC which starts its hearings tomorrow.

As we suggested in the House last Friday, it would seem to make some real sense to ask for extensions so our industry can properly prepare its case and that proper persuasion and bargaining with the United States administration could take place. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) seems to discount that idea. Once again, he is countenancing inaction, the strategy of do-nothing, wait and see, hold back. That is what happened to the shakes and shingles issue. No action was taken, nothing was done and "zap", to use the Prime Minister's famous expression, 4,000 workers were affected.

By this resolution we want the House to go on record as clearly indicating that in that process we want to be treated fairly. We want a fair hearing and the opportunity to present our case in its most effective terms. We do not want to be rushed, pushed or harried into doing something we are not ready to do. So I hope Hon. Members will support that part of the resolution.