

by Libertarians; out of moneys paid by people not interested in politics at all.

Their money is taken by the hierarchy of the labour movement and forked over to the New Democratic Party for use in election campaigns—and we see the results in the tattered remnants of the New Democratic Party that we see on the other side of the House. There are not too many of them in the House this evening because their Leader has lost all control over them. There is not even a handful in the Chamber this evening.

But, I digress.

Some Hon. Members: Ho, ho!

Mr. Crosbie: The Hon. Member for Renfrew has raised a serious point. He is concerned about the softwood lumber industry, the plight of which certainly has to be reviewed.

That industry did well in 1987, but is not doing well now, and the prospects for 1989 are not as good as one would like them to be. As the Hon. Member will understand, there was a Memorandum of Understanding entered into between the provinces and the Government of Canada, with the Province of Ontario only disagreeing. While there was not over-all agreement, it was felt that, rather than incur a countervail tariff in the order of 15 per cent in the U.S., the moneys involved, amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, should be retained in Canada through the imposition of an export tax imposed by the federal Government, with the proceeds of that tax being turned over to the provinces, or an increase in the provincial royalty.

British Columbia, which accounts for 70 per cent of all softwood lumber exports to the U.S., chose to go the route of a royalty increase, and it can adjust that royalty to account for exchange rate fluctuations. If the exchange rate changes, a quarterly adjustment can be made to the royalty rate.

However, the federal export tax cannot be adjusted to take account of exchange rate fluctuations.

Ontario opted for the export tax as opposed to going the royalty route, and it now seems that it might be more advantageous for Ontario to have gone the royalty route. I suggest that the Hon. Member approach the Government of Ontario on this as well. Certainly if the industry and the provinces wish to enter into discussions to review the situation, that can be done. It seems to me that it is something that will have to be reviewed in the next month or so.

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

Mr. Hopkins: I am pleased to hear the Minister's offer to review it. Certainly, the Memorandum of Understanding should be reopened and discussed further. I point out that the industry was quite prepared to fight the legal battle on the countervail action, as was the Province of Ontario.

There is concern in British Columbia today because of the course of action chosen. It is not considered to be a perfect solution. There is a great deal of concern in the softwood lumber industry in British Columbia today about the course taken.

I appreciate the remarks of the Minister—and certainly I am glad I created such an interesting debate on the subject of the Canada Elections Act. It may be that we can get some action on that in the not too distant future as well.

The Minister insinuated that I was of the view that industrialists and corporate people should not have a view to express—and that is not what I said at all. Any Canadian citizen, regardless of his/her walk of life, can express a view, whether during an election campaign, or at any other time. That is a basic freedom. My point is that one should not have the right, and does not have the right, to go out and buy the views of other people during the course of an election campaign.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Macleod on debate.

Mr. Ken G. Hughes (Macleod): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity of participating in the debate on the motion for the third reading of Bill C-2. At the outset I should like to thank the voters of the new, although historically significant, federal riding of Macleod.

It is a real honour to have been chosen by the people of Macleod to represent them in the House of Commons. It is the area in which I was born and reared, and where my family roots are deep.

I welcome the opportunity to speak in this historic debate. I look forward to sharing with my colleagues in this place some of the history of my corner of Canada, the southwestern corner of Alberta, tucked up against The Great Divide.

I share this not for any narrow political purpose but because the people of Macleod are a great example of the kind of people who will take advantage of the opportunities created by the Free Trade Agreement.