

Adjournment Motion

I know the government benches will be quick to point out that this Bill only authorizes the Canadian Government to collect a tax from its own citizens. However, that is really a technicality. We are not legislating of our own accord. We are doing so under a direct threat from an economic pressure group in a foreign country. This legislation would legitimize the protectionist powers in American society. It would say that we approve of our Government accepting terms of trade dictated from the other side of the border. This is not some penalty imposed by a neutral body. It is not the finding of some international tribunal. This is simple acknowledgement of power. It is the triumph of American economic power over Canadian sovereignty, signed and sealed by the Government of Canada. That is frightening.

No one can say where that power will be exerted next. It could take aim at the regional development programs which have been of such benefit to my riding, for example, and many other ridings in this country. Will some American competitor look at aid to industry and declare that this is the stumpage fee of that industry? That would be disastrous. By all means, let us pause to reconsider this Bill. Do we really want to acknowledge that we lie in the American sphere of economic influence? Canadians may bless or curse us for the consequences of the actions we are considering today. I urge caution, and counsel that we accept the necessity of this delay.

In conclusion, I say that in the eyes of the Americans, in the estimation of Washington, the tougher we act and the tougher we negotiate in this country the more respect they will have not only for this institution, this Government which is faltering very badly right now, but the greater respect they will have for our country. If we simply sit back and acquiesce in virtually everything they demand, and I think this is the beginning of that sad and sorry road, there will be no respect, nothing but utter contempt. They will continue to take us for granted and that indeed will be a very sad day for this country.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 66, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway)—Herbicides—Use of weed killer 2,4-D; the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster)—Trade—United States duty on Canadian softwood lumber. (b) Minister's position—Canadian proposal; the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps)—Canadian Human Rights Commission—Appointment of Antonio Arcangel to Human Rights Tribunal. (b) Request for investigation of appointee.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER PRODUCTS EXPORT CHARGE ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Miss Carney that Bill C-37, an Act respecting the imposition of a charge on the export of certain softwood lumber products, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee, and the amendment of Mr. McDermid (p. 2601).

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Westmorland—Kent): Madam Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to speak on this Bill. I must say that it is the second time I rise in this debate on a Bill which will impose a 15 per cent tax on lumber exports to the United States.

I am a bit shocked by the amendment asking that the question be now put for the simple reason that I believe this Bill to be very important and a threat to our sovereignty.

Government Members would like us to believe that our sovereignty is not being threatened. I respect their views, but I would like to make a few points.

In the memorandum of agreement, it is written that the Americans can come to Canada and impose their will. They can refuse to approve certain measures which the Canadian Government and the provinces might want to take in relation with our natural resources, especially lumber.

Madam Speaker, sovereignty is something that cannot be measured, but it is certainly something that can be felt. As Canadians, we feel proud of our country, proud of being masters of our own destiny, and I believe that all Canadians want the House of Commons and the Government to see to it that this sovereignty is respected by everyone, both in Canada and abroad. We have a very special role to play in this area. As I said, Canadians have the feeling that we are masters of our own destiny, that we can decide what we will do and how we are going to act and how this country will be governed.

Madam Speaker, I believe that the sovereignty of a nation must be respected. This means that our sovereignty should be respected by our neighbours. They must respect us and we must express our concern every time we feel our sovereignty is being threatened.

Hon. Members will recall the *Polar Sea* icebreaker incident in the Canadian Arctic. All that this icebreaker did, Madam Speaker, was to trace a path in the Arctic waters. There are no signs left of its passage.

An Hon. Member: It broke the ice.

Mr. Robichaud: It broke the ice, as my colleague has pointed out. In fact, I am certain that the Inuits who live in that region were threatened because the ice is the habitat of the fauna on which they depend.