

or will he take action on behalf of the workers, the owners, and their families?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the free trade agreement was not in effect when—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Read the agreement.

Mr. Crosbie: I try to answer in a mild fashion, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: If I might just start my reply again. Unfortunately, in 1986 when this matter arose, the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement was not in effect. If it had been in effect the shakes and shingles decision taken in the United States could not have occurred in the form—

An Hon. Member: You are choking.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the Minister could finish his answer.

Mr. Crosbie: This is my first glass of water in 20 years, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: I agree with the Hon. Member that this is a deplorable decision. It was a decision that is damaging to both the Canadian and the U.S. industries, and it is a great pity that President Reagan apparently was not advised so that he did away with the shakes and shingles action as he could have done. He did, however, reduce, as the Hon. Member knows, the amount of the additional duties that are being levied. I suppose we should be thankful for that, but this decision is harmful to the industries in both countries.

Ms. Langan: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the House that loss of jobs in the shakes and shingles industry is not a laughing matter.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Langan: I would thank Mr. Crosbie for his choking response.

Some Hon. Members: Order.

Oral Questions

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Prime Minister. Is the Prime Minister rushing through the business of this House so that we can take a Christmas holiday while families in British Columbia, in Mission—Coquitlam in particular—

Mr. Lewis: Stop ringing the bells.

Mrs. Langan: —are facing a future of unemployment? Will the Prime Minister stand up for those people, the workers in the industry, on this issue?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I rather resent the suggestion that I made a joking reply to the plight of the shakes and shingle workers. I am having difficulty with my voice because I am suffering from a cold as a result of struggling at GATT last week with 100 nations.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: We have taken action to protect the jobs of Canadians by refusing to allow cedar logs, blocks, bolts, planks and short boards to be exported to the United States. We issued an export prohibition. That was challenged in the courts. We were successful and that prohibition is now in effect. We are doing everything we can to preserve the jobs of Canadian workers.

We do not find this amusing, and I am not amused by the Hon. Member's suggestion that I took this matter lightly. We have done everything possible within Canadian law to ameliorate the effects of the action taken in the United States.

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AIRPORTS

PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT—HIRING OF TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, being a fellow Newfoundlander I have some compassion for the Member for St. John's West. I know that he is screeched out—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: It is that time of the year. We heard that he was in a sing-along in St. John's last week.