

Summit meeting, and that is contrary to every rule we have followed in dealing with that country.

Unless the Government is prepared, at least for once, to stand up to the United States and say very clearly that it can go no further, that kind of precedent will be used on sulphur, potash, and other lumber products, to the point where our natural resource industries will be threatened across the board. Lumber is just the beginning. The Americans know that they have us on the run on this one because the Government has caved in so often in the past.

The initial statement and initial reaction by the Government and by all Canadians must be that we will not accept this decision, that we will not only fight them in their own courts but take it to the international body—

Some Hon. Members: We have already done it.

Mr. Axworthy:—which they have undermined and weakened up to now. They have undermined the international process. They have undermined our position in GATT by temporizing and compromising up to this point in time. However we must continue that fight. Furthermore, before any further decision, we request at this point in time a proper and full debate in the House so that we know exactly what the Government will do, so that it will not make decisions behind closed doors, so that all Canadians and all members of this Chamber will have an opportunity to say what our trade policy should be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, there are perhaps 20,000 jobs across the country threatened by this decision. That threat hurts people, communities, the future of small businesses, and the whole fabric of society, especially in British Columbia.

[Translation]

It is a decision that is very problematic for the entire country. It is problematic for Quebec, for Ontario and for the other provinces.

[English]

I have to say that it is something which I personally feared very much when the decision came from the Senate finance committee last spring. Hon. Members may remember that I predicted at that time that the first price we would pay would be a cost on our lumber in the order of 15 per cent to 20 per cent. Fortunately it is 15 per cent, not 20 per cent. As the Minister said, this is a preliminary decision. Unfortunately with preliminary decisions, they can go up as well as go down.

I think the entire House feels a sense of regret, of unhappiness, and of having been badly used by the process in the United States. That process does not even permit lumber producers in the United States to have the subsidies they receive assessed against any subsidies which they claim we receive. I think I speak for the House when I say that that

Income Tax Act

process is simply unacceptable. In respect of the Government's own approach to the issue, I must say that we have had a series of missteps, a series of mistakes, a series of ridiculous turn-arounds which have badly damaged our case up to now and which I fear will badly damage our case in the future. For instance, we finally heard the statement from the Minister today that we would fight this all the way and that stumpage does not provide a subsidy to Canadian lumber producers, coming just two weeks after the same Minister in fact took a public position which completely undermined our position in respect of the very points she is now making.

• (1550)

We have to look as well at this bizarre, ridiculous attempt to justify the U.S. free trade talks on the basis of yet one more disaster into which these trade talks have led us. We were promised in the special committee that the free trade talks would keep us secure from American retaliation. In fact, since then we have been attacked on issue after issue, whether it be fish, shakes and shingles, lumber, possibly potash, brass or possibly steel. This has happened since September when the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) said he was going to take us into free trade, and that was going to be our protection. Instead we have been hammered again and again. That hammering has today reached the final stage with this heavy 15 cent tariff on our lumber.

My last point is to say that the Minister should surely, as her office was suggesting earlier this week, have come to the House today with suggestions of what the Government intended to do about it. Instead the Government intends to sit and to talk, a final ignominy, of which I think this Government should be ashamed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret to advise that the Hon. Member's time has expired. Am I to assume that the 14 minutes will not be tacked on this evening and we will just carry on with Orders of the Day? Is there unanimous consent for that to occur?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Hockin that Bill C-11, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, it seems, I suppose in some small measure that rather than a diversion we have had a statement by the Minister for International Trade (Miss Carney), which has come not as a shock to a lot of us,