

*Supply*

Return tabled.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 82—FORESTRY PRODUCTS—REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION TO PROTECT CANADIAN INDUSTRIES.

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry)** moved:

That this House condemns the lack of care and concern for workers in the cedar shakes and shingles industry and in the softwood lumber industry shown by the Prime Minister in his letter to President Reagan, in which he clearly put his personal interests ahead of those of working Canadians and calls upon the Government to take immediate action (1) to assist workers in the lumber industry and in the shakes and shingles industry by invoking the Employment Support Act; (2) by assisting in every way the softwood lumber industry in making the Canadian case before the United States International Trade Commission; (3) to ensure that proper time is given to make this case by, if necessary, obtaining extensions to the hearing time; (4) and by initiating proper and effective action under the rules of GATT to ensure that this matter is satisfactorily considered by the international trading system.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by welcoming all my colleagues to another opening Monday morning session. I think it is appropriate that we start the week with a debate that concerns some very central questions that are at the hearts and minds of many Canadians.

One of the important advantages of being a Member of Parliament is the opportunity to leave Ottawa on Thursday or Friday to go back to one's constituency. That is the moment of truth, as they say, because that is when you find out what Canadians in your own region and across the country are thinking. I think it is incumbent upon us to come back here, as we do at the beginning of the week, and try to reflect upon the feelings and concerns of the people on current issues.

I have a report to make this morning. Having spent a couple of days back in my riding meeting with an interesting and wide variety of people, all the way from the learned academic, that my friend from Essex—Windsor and I had the opportunity to address, to a series of weddings, bar mitzvahs and various other forms of social engagements, there is one thing that comes through very clearly on the minds of Canadians about the present Government's position on trade, and that is total, complete confusion. They do not know what this Government is trying to do, what it is trying to say, its goals, where we are going or why we are going there. They are told something totally different every 24 hours and the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) is the embodiment of that confusion. He is the source of that wide ranging muddying of the waters. The Prime Minister's incredibly optimistic objectives about creating jobs and entering a new era of co-operation can only be characterized now by total and complete disillusionment with those goals. One need only to ask the workers in British Columbia who are being laid off in the cedar shake and shingle industry this morning, or members of the lumber industry

across the country who are facing a most incredibly devastating blow, if they thought it was such a wonderful idea.

● (1110)

Consider the consternation in the minds of Canadians when they read this morning of the price they had to pay in order for the Prime Minister to have his ego massaged, as he so eloquently stated in his letter to the President. The price we had to pay in order to get those free trade talks launched was a commitment by the President of the United States to put the fix in on the softwood lumber industry. In an interview this morning a senior adviser to the Senate Finance Committee said that whatever happens before the International Trade Commission, and whatever quasi-judicial process takes place, the President of the United States had to commit to the Senators on that committee that he would do something about Canadian softwood lumber.

This whole process is a farce if the deal has already been made behind closed doors. That clean launch was in fact a dirty launch because it carried with it the threat to thousands of jobs in this country. How can Canadians have any sense of confidence about one of the most important and vital issues facing them when the Government will not tell them what is happening, because it obviously does not know itself?

Let us consider the statement made by the Prime Minister as reported in the weekend press. He was speaking to his partisans in Toronto during his so-called opening campaign speech in defence of his free trade talks. However, what did he defend? He defended the Auto Pact and said: "I am going to go out and sign a whole series of Auto Pacts." If that is what he wants, we can agree and stop the debate right now. That was a good deal but it had nothing to do with free trade. It was a managed trade agreement arrived at through a carefully negotiated settlement on an important sector concerning the two countries. It gave safeguards and guarantees to both sides about jobs, research and the industry.

The Prime Minister says that he wants to sign a series of Auto Pacts, including a hydro pact for Quebec and, a fishing pact for the Atlantic Provinces. He said: "I want the benefit of the oil pact to be applied to all these other sectors." We said that three years ago. The Government has said that the Liberal proposals in the past made no sense, but we said that we were prepared to negotiate sectoral arrangements.

**An Hon. Member:** Why didn't you?

**Mr. Axworthy:** We started to negotiate them but you came along and changed the rules. It was your Party that developed the grand design with the "the big picture" as the Prime Minister says, of comprehensive total free trade. Now he wants to sign agreements on a series of sectoral arrangements.

How can Canadians be expected to understand what the Government is attempting when the Prime Minister himself obviously does not understand what he is trying to do? It is