

conduct the business of the House of Commons properly. But we do not like it and we have the majority." So the Conservative Government of the day decided to throw this away and impose their own set of rules that would suit their own political agenda. They said at that time: "Do not be alarmed, opposition Members, because we are only going to do this once. This is very important and we are not going to do this again. Trust us, this is a once-in-a-lifetime situation".

The last time this was done was in 1883. Since 1883, until this summer they said: "We are going to have to do this but do not be alarmed because we will never do it again." They are now doing it again. Once again they broke their word. They said: "Trust us, we will never do it again". They are now doing it again. They are now taking the Standing Orders, those rules that govern the way we do business in this place, throwing them out the window and imposing their own set of rules to suit their political agenda. As I say, it is their political agenda because the Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie) himself just yesterday indicated that this January 1 deadline for this trade legislation is an arbitrary deadline. It can be changed. If it happened in January or February of 1989, that would be fine, he said.

Why are members of the Conservative Government ramming, jamming, bashing this legislation through the House of Commons? They say it is in the nation's interest, it is a national emergency. Mr. Speaker, you have the right as the Speaker of the House of Commons to recall Parliament. If the Government really did need to sit extra hours and into the Christmas recess, and if you agree, Mr. Speaker, that indeed it was in the nation's interest to do that, then you have the right under the Standing Orders as we know them today to recall Parliament at any time. You have done that in the past, Mr. Speaker. Rather than listen to you, Mr. Speaker, the person who is the servant of the House of Commons, they said that they have a majority, they know best and they are going to forget the rules, traditions, practices and so on of the House of Commons and they will impose their Conservative agenda.

I think we have to ask ourselves what is this Conservative agenda. They now bring in a motion which states that we are going to sit late into the night, we are going to be here on Christmas Eve to debate this motion, and perhaps on the day after Boxing Day, and so on. We

are going to throw out the idea of a legislative committee so that we cannot hear witnesses. We are going to bar any experts from reacting to this legislation.

What is next? I ask Members opposite to think about this. Will the next motion the Government will bring forward be to do away with Question Period because it does not like Question Period? Will the next motion be to do away with having Standing Committees of the House of Commons because they can be embarrassing at times? I think of the Chairman of the Finance Committee and how on a number of occasions his comments have brought some embarrassment to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). So we will do away with committees.

Are we going to do away with the sittings of Parliament? It is required that Parliament must sit at least once a year. Why not change that to once every 20 years? That is how totalitarian governments begin.

I say let us be cautious. When we look at this situation step by step, there is no question that this demolition team is clearly at work in what their long-term agenda is in terms of demolishing this Parliament, something which I think we have yet to see.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

• (1100)

**Mr. Speaker:** It being eleven o'clock a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5) the House will now proceed to Statements by Members pursuant to Standing Order 31.

---

## STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

### TRADE

#### SOFTWOOD LUMBER EXPORT TAX

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Mr. Speaker, two years ago the Conservative Government entered into an agreement with the United States to impose a 15 per cent export tax on Canadian softwood lumber being sold in the United States. This was the first time in history that any country imposed such a massive penalty of over \$500 million on its largest industry, the forest products industry.

In the last two years the Canadian dollar has appreciated in value from 71 cents to 83 cents to the U.S. dollar, costing the Canadian forest industry another 15 per cent on the value of its exports to the United States.