

Sixteen individual committees will provide easy and understanding access for virtually every Canadian who wants an opinion heard by the Government and its negotiators. The names of the chairpersons for these committees have been announced. The decisions on the membership of the groups are being concluded this month. If any Member of the House does not have a list of the chairpersons, I would be pleased to provide one so that constituents may be well informed of their route to the top in talking trade here at home. It is important that the approach we take to the trade talks is a true reflection of the interests and character of all of Canada. That is why we have been so meticulous in establishing a workable consultative program and structure.

● (1550)

I believe that all the ingredients are in place for successful trade talks. The time in history is right. The time for Canada's economy is right. We have the experience as traders. We have created a mechanism that will allow the Government to speak for all Canadians. In short, we are ready to talk. The 10 Premiers are on side and want the talks to go on. We are ready to deal if there is a deal to be made.

From then on it will be up to Canadians, business and labour, to exploit that by building and enhancing the jobs and building this country economically again. I have no doubt in my mind that Canadian exporters can reach out and beat the world if given the opportunity. That is what the Government is attempting to do. It is creating the climate and getting guarantees that we can do it, then going from there. Enhanced trade is our future.

I wish that this subject, which is so important to the country, could have been handled on a non-partisan basis with all three Parties in Canada speaking with one voice to the Americans. That is not the case. Anyone reading the Debates of the House of Commons can see that there is a lot of negativism and disagreement among the political Parties represented here. I deeply regret that. This is just too important to the future of the country to play cheap political games with. I hope there will be some second thoughts when the talks get under way so that we will not be faced with the problems which we presently have.

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan—Malahat—The Islands): Mr. Speaker, the last speaker for the Conservative Party regretted that all Parties were not speaking with one voice on this issue. I think we may have been able to speak with one voice on this issue if the Conservative Party and the Government of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) had shown a little realism in advance of the very unfortunate decisions which came down from the United States in the last couple of weeks. If there had been a sense of realism over there and we had confidence that the Government knew the score when going into these talks, there may have been a much greater possibility of speaking with one voice.

I welcome the opportunity to take part in this debate condemning the failure of the Government to act in Canada's

interests in the free trade discussion with the United States and, in particular—and this is very important in my area—for its failure to obtain an agreement to suspend unilateral tariff action by either country during the period of these discussions.

I want to stress the importance of this issue, not only to Canada as a whole but in particular to British Columbia and my riding. While taking a look at the global implications of the trade talks and the way in which the Government has not dealt with them adequately, I want to focus on Canada's number one industry, that being the forestry industry. My Province of British Columbia is dependent on that industry. There are two basic factors involved here. The first is the question of the basic resource with which we operate, and the second is the question of markets. We are in trouble on both counts. This trouble is compounded by technological change over the last 15 to 20 years which has resulted in increased productivity by fewer workers. There is an up side to that in that it makes us more competitive, but the down side is that it has resulted in massive layoffs.

The long-term unemployment problem in British Columbia is more severe than in any other province in Canada. Of those who are unemployed in British Columbia, 31 per cent have been unemployed for more than six months, as compared to the Canadian average of 25.8 per cent. Fourteen point two per cent of those who are unemployed have been unemployed for over a year, as compared to 10 per cent in the rest of Canada. Unemployment itself is a very serious problem, but even more serious is the fact that many of those who are unemployed have been unemployed for periods of longer than six months and 14 per cent of them have been unemployed for longer than a year.

The question of markets is absolutely crucial to the lumber industry because it is oriented toward exports. The United States is one area where we had markets which are now being closed to us as a result of Government action. On May 20 a 35 per cent tariff was imposed by the Prime Minister's friend, President Reagan, on our shake and shingle industry. This will affect up to 4,000 workers in British Columbia. Tomorrow a decision is going to be made as to whether the United States International Trade Commission will proceed with a petition which calls for a very high countervailing duty on Canada's \$3.5 billion softwood industry.

I want people to realize the personal problems which are created by this 35 per cent tariff on the shake and shingle industry. I talked with the operators of a small shake and shingle business in my riding. Like so many of these operations, it is a husband and wife operation which has a few employees. They are involved in helicopter logging to get cedar shake bolts out of very difficult terrain. Some of these shake bolts are then processed in a small mill which they have and others are shipped by truck to a larger shake mill in the Fraser Valley. They are then exported to markets in California. These people work very hard and have a reasonable standard of living as a result of their hard work. They are able to give employment to a small number of people in the community.