

Softwood Lumber Products Export Charge Act

the huge amount of money about which we are talking, the \$600 million at best.

Clause 6 of the Memorandum of Understanding provides the following:

The Government of Canada will take no action, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no other governmental body in Canada takes any action, directly or indirectly, which has the effect of offsetting or reducing the export charge or replacement measures—

Furthermore, in early January, President Ronald Reagan pledged in writing: "I will take action if Canada does not live up to the terms of the agreement". The question is, what action will he take. President Reagan said that the action might include tariffs.

Similarly, on December 30, 1986, a letter was written to the Coalition for Fair Lumber Exports by U.S. Trade Representative Clayton Yeutter and Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige, identifying seven different types of Canadian government assistance to industry which the U.S. Government would not accept. These included rebate, remission or deferral of the export charge, provision of grants or low-cost loans, exemption from other federal or provincial government charges, assumption of obligations currently borne by the industry, reduction in stumpage or other fees, changes in the way that the volume of timber is measured, and the non-competitive awarding of contracts for silvaculture, road building, recreational, and other forestry activities.

In other words, and I am quoting from Clayton Yeutter and Malcolm Baldrige, Clause 6, according to the U.S. interpretation, severely limits if not outrightly prohibits Canada and its provinces from helping the forest industry and the communities involved. That is about what we are talking when we say our sovereignty is at stake here and our sovereignty has been affected by the agreement. This is why we strongly oppose the Bill. This is why we object to the Government bringing in a measure which prevents us from debating further or prevents us from bringing in further amendments. We will have to vote at the end of the debate, when our 40 Members and the 30 members of the NDP have finished debating.

We have not heard what members on the government side have to say about it. Its Members from Quebec and everywhere else have been very quiet and very subdued in this debate. They remind us of little trained seals when they say "yes, yes, yes" and "no, no, no".

Mr. Mantha: Oh, come on.

Mr. Gauthier: I hear the Hon. Member from North Bay. The Government of Ontario, through Mr. Peterson, said that it opposed this issue. The Hon. Member, coming from North Bay, should know better than to vote for the measure. I happen to know that in his area there are large interests in the wood industry. He has lumber mills and forestry operations. They need roads and they need to develop that resource. If I am mistaken, the Hon. Member can rise in his place and say so; I would invite him to do that. However, he will act like a trained seal and say "yes, yes, yes, Mr. Prime Minister", will he not? I

invite him to answer that question since he made a comment. Does he want the floor?

Mr. Mantha: Why didn't you settle it in 1983?

Mr. Gauthier: I hear the Hon. Member. We settled it in 1983; we obtained a favourable judgment.

Mr. Mantha: Short term.

Mr. Gauthier: He is debating with me, Madam Speaker. I invite the Hon. Member from North Bay to rise in his place. I realize my time is coming to an end, Madam Speaker. I hope you will recognize the Hon. Member from North Bay and that he will get up to give us the benefit of his thoughts on the matter.

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Madam Speaker, you may note that I took a considerable length of time rising to my feet. It was in the hopes that perhaps the Hon. Member from North Bay would accept the invitation to speak, or that perhaps a government Member from Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, or any other province adversely affected by the proposed legislation would rise to speak.

Mr. Mantha: Speak for yourself.

Mr. Murphy: All of us in the House face a serious problem when government Members refuse to rise to defend legislation. We can speak about the faults we see in the legislation, and we see many of them.

Mr. Blenkarn: Put the question.

Mr. Murphy: All we get from government is heckling from a back-bencher who will not get up to speak on the piece of legislation. That is not what Parliament is all about. We can point out error after error, mistake after mistake, in the Memorandum of Understanding and in the legislation before us. We can also point out how the legislation will negatively affect vast regions of the country. However, the Government will not put up any of its Members to explain what they believe is positive in the legislation. If the Government will not rise to say that we are wrong because of this or that, then it leaves the impression that it does not have a good case.

The proceedings of the House of Commons are being televised. Reporters will be covering some of the debate. People watching the debate will ask why the Government is not explaining its own case? This broadcast is going across the country to many people and communities directly affected by the legislation. Those people will say that a good point was made by the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy), the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier), and perhaps the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy), but that the Government did not respond to it. They will be rightfully concerned because it is their jobs, communities, and livelihoods which are being affected. It is a serious problem.

It is not new to this Government; we had the same problem with the previous Government. When it wanted legislation