

A recent casualty is the Ainsworth Company sawmill at Savona, British Columbia. This company has announced the August 15 closure of its stud mill. It states that it can no longer compete in the United States market. The result will be 120 employees laid off in a region of extremely high unemployment. For these 120 people to end up on unemployment insurance is unacceptable and unnecessary.

In 1987 the softwood tax revenues collected from the British Columbia companies will be more than \$200 million. This money was intended to be used to promote new job opportunities for the displaced workers, such as those at Savona, British Columbia, through intensive and extensive silviculture programs, new market and production development, economic diversification, and special support for single-industry towns. This \$200 million should be targeted for jobs, and not a general revenue fund as the British Columbia Government intends.

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REFUGEES

WEAKNESSES IN ADMISSION SYSTEM

Mr. Bill Attewell (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that Canada's refugee determination process must be changed to block the flagrant abuses taking place. Canadians have demonstrated a remarkable generosity over many years to welcome warmly genuine refugees from all corners of the world. In recognition of this long-standing generosity, the people of Canada were awarded the Nansen Medal through the United Nations last fall.

However, many Canadians are outraged over the events of the past year, and more particularly the arrival of 174 persons on the shores of Nova Scotia a few weeks ago. These people obviously schemed with foreign and domestic immigration brokers to exploit the weaknesses of our current system. Many Canadians and landed immigrants had to wait years to obtain legal approval to create a new life in this wonderful country.

Canada expects to welcome at least 20,000 persons under legitimate refugee and humanitarian programs this year, and will assist them to settle in our communities. However, when it is estimated that over 70 per cent of persons claiming refugee status are not valid, then clearly changes must be made.

I urge the two opposition Parties to stop playing politics and listen to Canadians who want fair, responsible action now. I am confident that the legislation will not diminish our caring attitudes towards the very real needs of genuine refugees, but it will deal harshly with bogus refugees and the unscrupulous brokers involved. Let us get on with discussion and amendments, if required, and the passage of Bills C-55 and C-84.

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INDUSTRY

FIRESTONE PLANT IN HAMILTON—REPORTED EXPORT OF MACHINERY

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, the last question on the last sitting day the House of Commons dealt with the issue of Firestone in my riding of Hamilton East. There are 1,400 jobs at stake. The Minister has now agreed to allow the machinery from that company to leave Canada, without asking for the repayment to the federal Government of a \$13.5 million grant which was paid by the taxpayers of Canada.

I have asked for a meeting with the Minister. I have received no reply. I have asked the Minister to conduct an inventory of all equipment sitting on the Firestone premises. The Firestone Company in Akron, Ohio, is in the process of closing the most productive plant in North America.

● (1410)

If the Government and the company expect the workers of Canada to believe our word when we say we will fight for them when we have a corporation which has the most productive workforce in the country and it is closed down, well, that is the result of free trade. That is the result of a Minister who has washed his hands of his responsibility. That is the result of a Government which does not care about 1,400 jobs in Hamilton East.

We are going to keep fighting. I think the Minister's treatment of this dossier is disgusting. It is incredible, and he should resign.

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WESTERN DIVERSIFICATION FUND

ANNOUNCEMENT WELCOMED

Mrs. Mary Collins (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to congratulate the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and his cabinet colleagues—

An Hon. Member: Are you serious?

Mrs. Collins: That's right—for the announcement last week in Edmonton of the \$1.2 billion Western Diversification Fund. I refer not only to the fund but to the establishment of the new Economic Development Agency for western Canada.

In Pacific Canada, in British Columbia, we certainly welcome this initiative. We are excited by the prospects that many of our small and medium-sized businesses will benefit from these funds. We will be encouraging our basic industries of forestry, fishing, and mining to add value to their products and will be looking toward new industry, tourism, high-technology and other kinds of industrial manufacturing to take advantage of these new funds.