

*Supply*

**Mr. Gerry St. Germain (Mission—Port Moody):** Mr. Speaker, having heard the comments of the Hon. Members of the House who have preceded me in this discussion I will now proceed to identify and examine several important aspects of this issue as they relate to the motion at hand.

I would like to start by restating the motion, which has been put forward by the Hon. Member who has just spoken in this House. It says:

That this House urges that the Government press upon the Government of the United States the unanimous views of the House of Commons as expressed in its resolution of May 23, 1986, and insist that the United States rescind the 35 per cent duties on British Columbia cedar shakes and shingles and guarantee that similar measures or other possible trade action will not be applied to Canadian products in the future if the present comprehensive trade negotiations are to proceed.

This motion seems to address the current situation to a degree in a critical, yet constructive manner. It must be pointed out, however, that the perspective represented in this motion varies greatly from all of the views on this issue previously stated by the members of the Opposition.

Members opposite initially broached this issue with blind fervour and hollow claims of petulance. I am now pleased to say that perhaps they have come to their senses, applied some logic and, yes, perhaps even used a little bit of common sense.

It is slowly becoming obvious, evidenced through the motion we are debating today, that the members of the Official Opposition may finally have allowed reason to prevail over rhetoric. It is hard to make that statement when we have just heard the Hon. Member from Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin). However, I believe they have allowed a little bit of reason to creep into their thinking. It appears that the Members opposite have finally recognized the implication of President Reagan's action, and the important role that the free trade negotiations must play in avoiding similar actions in the future.

I really do not think it is possible for me to overemphasize the gravity of the situation which has been created as a result of the United States placing a 35 per cent tariff on all British Columbia cedar shakes and shingles as exports. The response that has been expressed by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) accurately and fully displays the shock and sense of dismay felt by all Members of the House, those in the industry and the Canadian public as a result of the actions taken last week by President Ronald Reagan on this issue.

Yes, our Government was aware that the imposition of a tariff on British Columbia cedar shakes and shingles was being considered. Yes, we were aware that the President was under considerable pressure from both political counterparts and industry lobby groups. I want this House to understand, however, and I want the people of this country to understand, that in no way did we expect the action against B.C. cedar shakes and shingles to be levied in this form, as it is so contradictory to all that Mr. Reagan has been promoting for so long. It is even more appalling that such a rash and unjustifiable action should have been taken without the

President having first advised the Government of his intentions.

The Prime Minister has denounced the President's actions as being at variance with all his previous contentions, and as being totally unacceptable to the Canadian Government and to the Canadian people. It is reassuring to know that the Leader of our Government is prepared to take the appropriate actions to defend the people of our country from adverse measures such as this one.

It is the Canadian people who truly deserve mention when this issue is under debate. After all, it is the population of this country who must live in the wake of this irresponsible protectionist act on the part of the President of the United States. Undoubtedly all of the people of this nation will be affected to some degree.

I would like to comment in some detail on the direct and indirect effects this action will have on the people of British Columbia, but more specifically on the people from my riding, that is, the people from Mission—Port Moody. It is a region that survives almost solely on this resource-based industry and on directly related businesses. Its economy rests on a delicate balance, even when times are good, because, as we know, mother nature is both unpredictable and unrelenting.

Men and women who work in the forest related industries are familiar with trying times, and have certainly had to contend with their share of strife. The forest industry has endured a long and difficult struggle over the past five years, during which only the toughest have survived. Now, in the face of a 35 per cent tariff on all cedar shakes and shingle export products, it appears that there will be few survivors, if any.

Since the International Trade Commission first initiated action in this area I have continuously kept up to date on the status of the serious deliberations surrounding the cedar shake and shingle industry. I have been interested in what steps were being taken by our Government to influence any action that might result from the deliberations. I have been concerned for the people in my riding, I have been concerned for all British Columbians.

I have raised this issue three times in this House over the past month. During these statements I have stressed the vital importance of the B.C. cedar shake and shingle industry, and the necessity for a sound trade agreement to ensure the continued healthy existence of this industry, the lifeblood of British Columbia. On April 28, I said the following, as reported on page 12693 of *Hansard*:

The recommendation of the U.S. International Trade Commission for a 35 per cent tariff on Canadian red cedar shakes and shingles is a threat to jobs in British Columbia, in particular to Mission—Port Moody, the heart of Canada's shake and shingle industry. While trade negotiations will not in the meantime preclude traditional action against Canadian exports, they will lessen the threat.

On May 8, as reported on page 13080 of *Hansard*, I said:

One out of ten Canadian jobs is related to the forest industry. In British Columbia, forestry is our lifeblood. We cannot allow our lifeblood industry to fall prey to protectionist measures in the United States. The current threat of a 35