

Chair has been asked to rule whether it is in a position at this point to cope with a matter which may or may not have been unparliamentary at the time. Because of our practices, the Chair finds that it is not in a position to make a comment on that. Those are the rules.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 82—VIABILITY OF FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order at this time because I believe this is the first day on which we will move a motion under the new rules dealing with opposition days. I put to the House that our intention in moving the motion today is in the hope that the Parliament of Canada might in fact agree that these issues are vital and that we could transmit the view of Parliament to the Congress of the United States.

The motion was written in traditional form; it condemns the Government. However, if during the course of the day it were deemed advisable by all Hon. Members that such a message could be transmitted to the Congress of the U.S., we would be willing to withdraw those words in condemnation or work out some other satisfactory wording in order that the message could in fact be sent as a clear message from the Parliament of Canada to the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Speaker: The House is aware that that is not strictly a point of order.

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena) moved:

That this House recognizes the dire circumstances faced by Canadian forest workers by impending legislative initiatives of the U.S. Congress and the equally dire circumstances faced by Canadian farmers as a result of the U.S. Farm Bill and condemns this Government for its failure to adequately protect the viability of these two vital sectors of the Canadian economy.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak on the forest issue in particular. Many Canadians forget from time to time that it is the largest industry in Canada by far. In terms of the agricultural industry, the Hon. Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo) will lead off by referring to the problems which are likely to emanate from the legislation presently before the United States Congress.

I am pleased to see the Minister of State for Forestry (Mr. Merrithew) and the Minister for International Trade (Mr. Kelleher) present in the Chamber because they at least in so far as the government side is concerned, are aware of how dire the circumstances are becoming in the United States in relation to the forest issue. I am sure you are aware of the situation as well, Mr. Speaker, having attended similar meetings with our counterparts in the United States.

Supply

It appears that most Members of the U.S. Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, have now dropped the positions which they had historically taken on subsidies and on Canadian stumpage. It looks like the Seven Veils of Ali Baba are gone now. In fact, the Americans have made quite clear that they intend to move unilaterally with some kind of embargo action, very likely in May, this being a mid-term election year. I should like to deal with some of the things which have been said both in the American Senate and in the House of Representatives. However, before doing so, I want to talk a little about what has been happening on our side of the issue here in Canada in relation to the Estimates first, because it is symptomatic of how federal Governments and provincial Governments, one after another, have dealt with Canada's largest industry and have basically treated it as a milking cow. They have used it as a cash cow rather than reinvest any substantial amount of capital back into it.

We see in this year's Estimates that in 1985 the forest industry produced \$25.9 billion and that the total for forestry in the 1986-87 Estimates is \$217 million. That amount is far less than a 1 per cent return by the federal Government on the value of the industry to our economy. If we look at any other sector in the Canadian economy, we find that it is dramatically higher. The forest industry alone has again been chosen to bear an unfair burden in terms of the Canadian economy. Also in looking at the Estimates we see that there is in fact \$14 million less for 1986-87 than there was for 1985-86, and that there has been an actual cut in person-years from 1,337 to 1,266. I think this indicates the priority which the Government places upon the forestry, even in terms of its own campaign promise in 1984. As recently as just a few weeks ago, it was again brought to our attention in Montreal in a story entitled "Name Minister, Forestry Group Asks Government". In part, it reads as follows:

The President of the Canadian Institute of Forestry says the federal Government should fulfil a campaign promise and set up a Department of Forestry. Jack Toovey said better forest management was a 1984 campaign pledge of the Conservatives but the industry is still awaiting the creation of a ministry.

"Many people resent the fact that we have only a Ministry of State for Forestry tucked away, like a franchise farm team, under Agriculture," Toovey said.

I certainly agree with that. It was an issue on which the Government campaigned strongly and forcefully in British Columbia. It was believed that in fact there would be some kind of new move in Canada toward a full ministry and toward bringing in a national forest act, something which has not been done as yet. However, at least I have a copy of the one which is circulating in the Department. There were many proposals. We should move ahead rather than spend five cents out of every dollar collected in taxation in relation to the forest sector on reforestation, silviculture and so on. In fact, as we see in the 1986-87 Estimates, we will in fact move backward. It will be worse than it was under the years the Liberals ran our federal forestry.

I should like to return to the axe which is falling in the United States. It is really an ominous move, coming from both the Republicans and the Democrats. It has become a very