

Adjournment Debate

I have the figures right here that we used in that press conference last summer. Do you know where they come from, Mr. Speaker? They come from his own government's Department of Employment and Immigration.

The minister went on to say: "They are not adding up the pluses". You bet we are. Down in the right-hand column of this report from the employment office in our area are the minuses of jobs that were lost and the pluses of those that were created. The bottom line adds up to 1,667 in the town of Renfrew alone. Surely that deserves more than a smart aleck answer from a minister on the benches opposite.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I am not one to be up in the House shouting and screaming about things all the time. Things have to be pretty bad before I do. I do my homework before I get up, and I expect others to do theirs.

The other question I raised was on the forest industry, particularly in Ontario. It is really being hurt by the 15 per cent export tax, high interest rates, and the artificially high Canadian dollar.

I have talked to people all summer long, last spring, and this fall. It is sad what is happening out there. The bank realizes that the forest industry is weak, so what does it do? The banks and the trust companies throw their demand for the repayment of their loans on the desks. People are selling \$80,000 pieces of equipment for \$40,000 in order to get the bank off their back. They are selling \$40,000 worth of equipment for \$20,000.

If this keeps up the forest industry in this country is going to be absolutely devastated. It is time the government considered some kind of moratorium to protect our small business and sectors of industry in this country if we are ever to have anything left after this recession is over.

The Minister for International Trade promised us he was going to introduce an adjustment assistance program in this House in order to help those who were hurt by free trade.

The government will argue that the forest industry was not hurt by free trade, that it was not mentioned in there. However, the forest industry in this country knows that they were the scapegoats of the free trade signing

between the United States and Canada. It was Pat Carney, then Minister for International Trade, who signed to allow the Americans to charge a 15 per cent duty or tax on Canadian softwood lumber going into the United States.

Eventually the government decided to collect it itself, against our own softwood lumber people. Then the American banks lent money to their own industries, and along the northern part of the United States they built up their mills. They have a better product now than they had before and can compete better with us. Our own people are hurting badly as a result of this policy.

The lumber industry in this country feels that it was the scapegoat in order for this government to get its free trade agreement. Pat Carney, the Minister for International Trade at the time, has since been rewarded with an appointment to the Senate. Mr. Speaker, you can understand why I was really angry about this whole matter.

I am just going to put one more quote on record and then I will be finished. It is from Sinclair Stevens and deals with the negotiations which went on with regard to Mitel plant in Renfrew when it was about to be sold to a British firm. He had this to say as a reply in this House:

I pointed out, and will point out once again for the Hon. Member, that Mitel was in difficult financial straits. The Hon. Member cannot have it both ways. This company has offered to put into Mitel over \$300 million of fresh equity, which will at least ensure that 2,500 Canadian jobs, and 5,000, including international jobs will be preserved. I am on the side of the workers of Mitel, and I think it is time that the Hon. Member got on the side of the workers of Mitel as well.

That came from the benches of this government. Today we do not have a single employee left out of 550 in that plant. In fact, Archives Canada has taken it over for a storage place, a brand new plant that cost \$30 million.

I am calling on the government to bring forward an economic plan for eastern Ontario. We are absolutely serious about this matter. We are absolutely honest about doing it, because something has to be done to protect those people out there whose lives are really being destroyed economically.

Mr. Jack Shields (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. friend will not mind my doing this, but I would like to acknowledge first three very important visitors from