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Chair

Mr. Lee Richardson

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• (1550)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Centre, CPC)): Order.

We are prepared to debate Mr. Cardin's motion. I think everyone has the written text of the motion in both official languages.

Monsieur Cardin.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): Will the comments I made when we began discussing the motion be included in the business section?

[English]

The Chair: I can't be sure of that, so we'll let Monsieur Cardin begin again.

Thank you.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Mr. Chair, it is my pleasure to introduce a motion.

• (1555)

[English]

The Chair: I'm sure it is. It's our pleasure.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: It is my pleasure to introduce this motion, but that pleasure is tinged with some disappointment, given the urgent situation that has existed for several years now in the forestry and manufacturing sectors. One by one, the Conservative and Liberal governments have tried to implement measures that have unfortunately proved to be inconclusive. What has happened is that the forestry and manufacturing sectors have continued to lose jobs, and there is a risk that this situation is going to get worse.

Yes, the government has presented a program, or a foundation, that implements certain things, but that does not reflect the urgency of the problem. The decision is being postponed until the budget. But there are people who are in real need of this program. It is fine to help the communities — and we think the money is inadequate — but we also have to provide assistance to the manufacturing and forestry industries directly.

That is why this motion is being made. I assume that everyone has read it. I can read it again, if necessary. The motion contains several things that may generate debate. I will be pleased to debate it with my colleagues, but I am satisfied that if all of the recommendations

made to the government were applied the result would be that the manufacturing and forestry sectors would be able to come out farther ahead than they are now.

The notice of motion reads as follows:

Given the seriousness of the crisis rocking the forestry and manufacturing sectors, that the Committee recommend that the government introduce as soon as possible an improved aid package for the forestry and manufacturing sectors, including trade measures to support these sectors; systematically implement the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, especially those regarding safeguards; bring Canada's trade laws into line with the those of the United States and the European Union with respect to anti-dumping measures; carry out open and thorough studies on the impact of all ongoing trade negotiations on the manufacturing sector, and report the adoption of this motion to the House at the earliest opportunity.

So there are a few things in the motion that could stem the hemorrhage occurring in the forestry and manufacturing sectors and that would give those two industries the boost they sorely need.

I am prepared to debate the various elements of the motion with enthusiasm, and most importantly with the hope that my colleagues will pass this motion.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

You've heard the motion. We'll resume debate.

Go ahead, Mr. Julian.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Thanks you very much, Mr. Chair.

I support Mr. Cardin's motion, particularly because since the softwood lumber agreement was implemented we have seen 10,000 jobs lost throughout Canada, including in Maniwaki, in Témiscamingue, in New Westminster in my province, British Columbia, and in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Since the softwood lumber agreement — some might call it the softwood lumber betrayal — was implemented, the forestry industry has lost huge numbers of jobs. We have to act. Mr. Cardin's motion very clearly sets out the kind of measures that should be taken.

[English]

I'd like to add that this is an emergency. It's a structural jobs crisis. It's estimated that we're losing 200 jobs every single day in the manufacturing sector, in the softwood sector, the forestry sector. So 200 jobs every day means that every single day there is a delay, another 200 families lose a breadwinner.

I would hope that members in all four corners of this committee, representing all four parties, would support this motion unanimously so we could then move forward into the House and have the debate that needs to take place.

This is a crisis. It takes emergency measures, and I think Mr. Cardin's motion helps guide the government to the measures that need to be taken immediately.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Julian.

Mr. Maloney.

Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I'd perhaps like some clarification on what in fact the intention is. For instance, concerning an improved aid package, is this subsidies to the sectors, which could in fact violate our existing trade agreements?

As to the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, what specific recommendations are being referenced, all the recommendations? He references definitely those regarding safeguards, but it could include anything and everything that has ever been recommended. I wonder whether that could be tightened up a little bit.

Those are my comments.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Miller.

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, everybody here wants to see every one of our sectors, no matter what it has to do with, do well. From that sentimental part of it, it's not hard to support a motion like this.

The reality of it to everybody here, and Peter, is that the softwood lumber issue is not the reason that lumber is in the shape it is today. It has absolutely nothing to do with it. Without that deal, it would be a lot worse. This was something that was accepted and recommended by the majority and certainly all the large lumber-producing provinces and industry.

It's affecting mine out there, right now, but the reason it's doing so is the amount of lumber and trees that we're trying to salvage in your part of the world, which is the right thing to do, but it also puts a strain on demand. Right now, you can't give away a pine bush in my part of the world. That's the reality of it. It's not the softwood lumber agreement that has caused it, and in other sectors that are out there.

The Canadian dollar is another issue that's probably, if not the top cause of the stress on all these industries, certainly number two. Governments can't deal with that.

I know they're always looking at ways to help our industries, but I can't support this motion in the order in which it's put forth. Let's tell the truth on it, on what some of the causes are and what you can actually do and what you can't do.

• (1600)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

Monsieur André.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy André (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Of course I support the motion by my colleague Mr. Cardin.

The manufacturing sector is important to us in Quebec. You are aware of the situation. We have lost nearly 150,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector alone. This is a serious crisis. We believe that we can support this industry. We have seen what happened in the textile industry: whole plants have shut down. The same thing is now happening in the furniture industry, for example.

This industry very simply needs to have more support. We do not want protectionist measures to be applied: we want to have a plan to assist innovation and research put in place for this industry, so that it can become more competitive internationally. We believe in these industries. We have done the math: if the government does not implement support measures and the current losses continue, there will be no manufacturing industries left 15 years from now. They will have disappeared.

I believe we are capable of supporting them. In my riding, there are very productive industries that still need support for design and research, for example, to become more competitive internationally. We have to be capable of preserving these industries. If we leave it to the free market entirely, there are going to be closures. The manufacturing sector may disappear. In the case of the auto industry and other industrial sectors, we can see that support is needed. We have to act. We have to support these industries, while of course complying with international, trade and other laws.

The motion says we must "bring Canada's trade laws into line with the those of the United States and the European Union". Those countries have also been facing competition, and they have taken measures to support their industries. They have enacted laws to provide greater protection against dumping. We are not opposed to equal competition, but when it comes to exports, we note that China's currency, for example, is undervalued. We have to take measures, enact trade laws and improve our laws on trade. We are prepared to deal with competition, but it has to be between equals, human rights have to be respected, the dollar must have a fair value, and governments must not intervene directly in the production of goods to support business.

I believe that the government and the committee have to consider this issue. If we do not act, the manufacturing sector is going to disappear. This is a crisis. We have to act.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. André.

Mr. Bains.

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to respond very briefly to what Mr. Miller said. I do disagree with Mr. Miller's remarks with respect to the softwood lumber agreement. I think that does compound the issue. You're absolutely right when it comes to the high Canadian dollar; you're absolutely right when it comes to the U.S. housing market playing a role in the crisis faced by our forestry sector. But the fact that the government can virtually do nothing with the industry presently because of the way the softwood lumber agreement is structured is problematic. I think the fact of the \$1 billion fund just being announced, and the fact the government has given more assurances to the U.S. on the forestry sector, saying that it won't violate that agreement, speaks to the concern about specifically helping the forestry sector.

I think this motion speaks to a concern in that industry, and it's about investment and infrastructure and R and D. It's not a handout. It's about how we transition and become more competitive.

• (1605)

Mr. Larry Miller: It doesn't say R and D in there anywhere.

Hon. Navdeep Bains: I'm just saying that's the concern with respect to softwood lumber. That's my concern here.

I also want to echo the comments made by my colleague with respect to a concern about the wording of this motion.

If I could make a friendly amendment to get further clarification, there are two points I have concerns about. One is the fourth line, starting with "including trade measures to support these sectors; systemically implement the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal". Can we get more clarity on what these recommendations are? I have a concern we are supporting a motion that doesn't outline what the specific recommendations are. I would like clarity on that.

If you continue to read that motion all the way up to the point where it says "bring Canada's trade laws into line with those of the United States and the European Union with respect to anti-dumping measures", the friendly amendment would add "consistent with WTO guidelines." Then we can continue on with "carry out open and thorough studies on the impact of all ongoing trade negotiations."

So it's a friendly amendment that would clarify that particular change in our approach to anti-dumping measures.

I would also like to ask Monsieur Cardin for clarification on what specific recommendations he is referring to when he talks about the Canadian International Trade Tribunal.

The Chair: Okay.

Monsieur Cardin, I'm going to ask you to consider this, first of all, as a friendly amendment—or we'll have to consider it as an amendment to your motion.

Before you respond, we might as well deal with them at the same time.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: If I understand correctly, you are really talking about a subamendment.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Bains has—

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: To begin with, Mr. Chair, I will say that the recommendations made in this motion do not contravene the WTO rules in any way. That is why we can add the words "consistent with WTO guidelines" without a problem. That goes without saying. We are a member of the WTO and we certainly intend to act in a way that is consistent with its guidelines. While we may not like some of them, I hope that one day we will be able to assert ourselves at the WTO and get things changed. There are some guidelines that really should be changed.

To answer what Mr. Maloney seemed to be asking before, I will say that these are the terms, in my opinion. If it is not inconsistent with the agreements made with other countries, and it does not automatically contravene the WTO guidelines, there are several ways of providing assistance that we could more or less describe as indirect. For example, the government cut taxes, and automatically it was said that this was direct assistance to the forestry and manufacturing companies. I am not talking about money.

Mr. Miller is correct: there are other reasons why the manufacturing and forestry sectors are having problems, for example the value of the dollar, equipment and the need for technology. Money could be made available to companies for those purposes without contravening the WTO guidelines. That is possible. You all know it. We are also talking about bringing trade laws up to the standard of the United States and the European Union.

I am going to refer — and my colleague may go into this topic further — to Bill C-411. We have never understood why some people opposed it. Perhaps it was misinterpreted.

• (1610)

[English]

The Chair: I wonder if we could just ask you to follow, first of all, the points Mr. Bains requested.

We've dealt with that. You said you were okay with "consistent with WTO guidelines".

Could I ask you to revert now to the other point he raised, the other recommendation? That was about "including trade measures to support these sectors; systematically implement the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal". I think Mr. Bains, not to put words in his mouth, was asking you to clarify that. If we could just do that, then we could proceed with the debate.

Thank you.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Mr. Chair, it isn't that I want to speed things up. I was considering all of the comments that were made. I was coming to this point. This is precisely why I referred to Bill C-411.

In that bill, we were calling for measures to be implemented to make it possible to clearly identify occasions when other countries were engaged in dumping. Our words may have been misinterpreted: people may have thought that overall it was about protectionist measures against China. But we specified that we simply wanted to adopt measures that would be up to the same standard as what the United States and the European Union have on antidumping rules. We were not talking about unhealthy protectionism in this case; this is in fact an accepted practice.

In their trade with other countries, the United States and the European Union apply antidumping criteria to certain products, and when those products do not meet the criteria, they charge duty. This kind of process would help our businesses, at least indirectly. We do have to play on the same field as our competitors if we want to be competitive at a certain level, at least when it comes to establishing prices. There must not be exploitation, on either side, and of course the WTO guidelines must be respected.

In other words, we do not want to see the government taking measures that directly contravene the WTO guidelines. We do not want it to be described as protectionist. Even though our neighbour is particularly protectionist and does everything possible to protect its market, we do not want to act that way.

If you need any clarification, I will be happy to provide it.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Monsieur Cardin.

I think, with respect, that it was very clear at the outset when we agreed to go with “consistent with WTO guidelines”.

What we didn't respond to was Mr. Bains' question, and that was about what you meant by “including trade measures to support these sectors”, and “systematically implement the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal”.

I think he asked you to expand on that to determine whether or not he could, in fact, support it.

Is that correct, Mr. Bains?

Hon. Navdeep Bains: If you don't mind, Chair, I'd like to clarify my comments and my colleague's comments as well.

We, again, very much support the intent and the spirit of this motion. We think it's well written; we just want clarification.

The first was a friendly amendment, which I appreciate your support on. The second had to do with clarification with respect to the International Trade Tribunal recommendations. All I want to know is what those recommendations were. If by chance you don't have that information available at the present time, that's understandable. Maybe we can defer this discussion and have those included in the motion. If you have them, that's great. That's all I wanted clarification on.

•(1615)

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Mr. Chair, on the question of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, you know how it works. Companies that believe they have suffered damage and think that foreign products have been dumped have to apply to the tribunal. The

measures we wanted to include in Bill C-411 were specifically intended to prevent this situation and to allow for a speedy determination of whether dumping was occurring.

At present, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal rules on applications by companies or industries. This has happened several times and it is extremely expensive. The companies have to prepare, and do analyses and studies. They practically have to do the work of various government agencies. Take the example of Raleigh, which makes bicycles. It spent over \$300,000; the Canadian International Trade Tribunal found in its favour, but the government did not impose the additional duties that it was entitled to impose.

You will remember that the Minister, Mr. Bernier, said this was not a problem. Those may not be his exact words, but nonetheless jobs were going to be lost because we were going to sell fewer bicycles. Certainly it was not a problem, because we were going to pay less for them. He may be a bicycling enthusiast, but the industry was a victim of dumping.

When we have tools, institutions like the tribunal and the Canada Revenue Agency, which can do analyses and make findings that support the company, why does the government not simply act on those findings?

This is why these measures have to be taken. When the tribunal finds for a company, it would be reasonable to apply those measures and rule in favour of the industry, particularly when the company has paid \$200,000 or \$300,000 or \$400,000 to have studies done.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you. That's very helpful. I think that solves the second phrase.

What were you intending when you said “including trade measures to support these sectors”? Are there any specific ones you want to note?

Is that your question, Mr. Bains? Are you satisfied?

Hon. Navdeep Bains: I appreciate the effort made. There are some still outstanding questions, and I'm not sure if we can have a debate like this.

The Chair: We're going to get to it anyway, so it would be quicker to do it this way.

Hon. Navdeep Bains: I have just one clarification. It says here, “implement the recommendations”, so all I wanted were the specific recommendations. I appreciate my colleague illustrating a particular case of a tribunal decision, but I'm not sure if that's a recommendation. That's more of a decision on a particular case. Was he referring to the decision, or certain recommendations they made? Was it the specific case he highlighted, or other recommendations? That's what I want clarified.

The Chair: Monsieur Cardin.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy André: I would like to add something. Bicycles were mentioned. My colleague is absolutely right: these companies are in trouble and they are spending large amounts of money — we are talking about \$300,000 and \$400,000 — to defend themselves against what they consider to be unfair competition, and they are winning on that point. They have proved that dumping was going on.

Take another example, the furniture industry, which has done the same sort of thing. The Canadian Trade Tribunal was asked to do something, but ultimately those companies gave up. I was in contact with the Quebec Furniture Manufacturers Association, for example, and they had spent between \$300,000 and \$400,000. Ultimately, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal sent them away and told them to do their homework because it did not find that the documents submitted met their requirements. When the people in the association saw that the Canadian International Trade Tribunal made recommendations in favour of the bicycle companies and that ultimately the government did not implement its recommendations, they backed off. But the companies in the furniture industry knew that they had other recourses, such as imposing safeguards in a situation where an industry is believed to be temporarily threatened in order to support it. You know that this is permitted by the WTO. It is not new, because there are countries that do it. At present, there are major job losses happening.

When you speak to the Quebec Furniture Manufacturers Association, those people say they don't believe in it. They spend huge amounts of money to protect their businesses, and the government does nothing.

There is a problem. Do you understand, Mr. Bains?

• (1620)

[English]

Hon. Navdeep Bains: Very well, and God bless translation. My French is not up to par.

Again, I understand the point you're making. You're citing specific cases, and that's fine. Those are valid points you make. It says here in the motion that you want to implement recommendations. So all I'm saying is, what recommendations? That's all I want clarified: what are these recommendations? You cite cases, which is fine. I just want to know which recommendations you were referring to.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: They are general in nature.

The Canadian International Trade Tribunal has said that it was easy to see that companies here were having a lot of problems and were suffering considerably from the entry of a large number of new products into the market.

I would call that a recommendation, but the tribunal held that this meant that duty could be charged for a maximum of five years. This is an example of what the government could do and it is a recommendation by the tribunal. I also suggest that the government follow all of the tribunal's recommendations, that duty can be charged for five years.

If it did only that, the government would be making it possible for a company facing what could be described as dumping to reposition itself and invest in technology, if that is the immediate need.

This is a very specific example of recommendations made by the tribunal that we want the government to apply.

[English]

The Chair: I think your intent is becoming clear, but I think what is written in your motion suggests the government should implement every recommendation of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal across the board. Is that your intent, that the government automatically accept every recommendation of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, or are there specific ones you wish them to accept? If that's the case, I think we need a little work on this line.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Generally speaking, Mr. Chair, if the tribunal rules on a question it means that a thorough analysis has been done by the industry and other analyses have been done by the Canada Border Services Agency.

[English]

The Chair: Monsieur Cardin, we're covering ground over and over. I'm asking you the question, simply yes or no, are you implying you want all recommendations of the CITT to be accepted per se by the government?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: I would say yes, off the bat, because all of the analyses have been done.

Mr. Guy André: That is what the motion says: "...especially those regarding safeguards...". Safeguards have to be put in place when a business is truly threatened.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Allison.

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Thank you.

I'd just like to speak against this motion and to my Liberal colleagues, not only because I don't think it's clearly outlined but also because similar motions have been put forward at another three committees right now. I don't think it hurts us to delay at this point. They've got a similar motion in front of the natural resources committee, a similar motion in front of the industry committee, a similar motion in front of the finance committee.

My suggestion is, if they're going to debate that in the finance committee, let them do that, and let's hear what happens, because all we're doing is going in this parallel universe where basically the same motion is being put forward in four different committees. So my suggestion to the Liberals is it's not clearly outlined what those definitive things are, so it won't hurt us to delay this for a period of time and find out what the finance committee comes up with. That would be my suggestion, because now we're going to debate this motion, just like the finance committee, just like the natural resource committee, just like the industry committee, and waste all our time here when we've got work to do with Korea. It doesn't mean that if you're not happy with what happens in the finance committee we can't deal with this another time.

So that's my recommendation for putting a fork in this thing today so we can move on.

• (1625)

The Chair: Mr. Cannan.

Mr. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Thank you.

I thought another colleague was on the list before me, but I....

The Chair: For clarity, again, if you want to be on the list, you have to get the attention of the clerk. I don't keep the list. The clerk keeps the list.

Mr. Ron Cannan: No, it's okay. I was surprised.

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): You're responsible for the clerk, Mr. Chair. It's your fault.

The Chair: Isn't it great that there's nobody responsible for you, Mr. Pallister?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ron Cannan: Just echoing my colleagues' comments, I wanted to clarify something because of the understanding I have after talking with my staff.

I was looking at this motion and looked at the International Trade Tribunal. We have heard from them before in our committee, but I believe they fall within the parameters of finance—a lot of this does—with regard to their recommendation.

In terms of the concern my colleagues across the way had mentioned about the recommendations, I'm trying to get clarification about whether it's all trade tribunal recommendations or one specific one. There was one that was very concerning, that right now the legislation gives flexibility for the tribunal and our government to decide on balancing the interests of business and consumers—Mr. Cardin had mentioned the one situation with the bicycle company—and that whenever there are safeguards, you look at the long-term solution for the industry. I believe we need to allow that discretion to be provided for government for maximum flexibility, and if we were imposing the recommendations of the trade tribunal we would have our hands tied and we wouldn't have that ability. It would be lost if we implemented that.

I understand what my colleagues across the way were alluding to, as far as clarification of the recommendations is concerned. Generally, there's some support on the motion, but that is a concern. But there's also the fact that one part of the motion is about having studies on the impact of ongoing trade negotiations in the

manufacturing sector. I thought that's what we were trying to do with this committee. Specifically, we're dealing with South Korea and the trade talks and how we can help manufacturing, allow open doors to other countries and export markets. So the sooner we can move this off the agenda and move it to a committee that's more appropriate, we can get on with the committee business at hand and allow this committee to do what we're supposed to and provide more opportunities for our manufacturing sector so they can be prosperous, not only in their own province, but across the country.

I also wanted to mention the forestry sector and the concerns in my own riding. I met with one of the forestry industry representatives, a large company, Tolko. They have taken advantage of the accelerated capital cost for depreciation of equipment and invested over \$13 million and have now increased their efficiency to number one and two within the operation.

So there are some ways that we already have implemented, and we want to continue to see those increases through efficiency of operation, through investment of equipment, without having to impose regulations and subsidies and putting ourselves in jeopardy in the world trade agreement.

I would say that the way it's worded right now, I have problems. If we can make some amendments, as my colleagues from the Liberals have mentioned, we can look at that, but the way it stands right now I couldn't support the motion.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Cannan.

You began your remarks not dissimilar to the vein of Mr. Allison, who suggested that a similar motion is now before at least three other committees. I wonder if you would like to make a motion in that regard to table here until we've heard from one of those committees, so I could get the understanding of the committee if that's the way they want to proceed. Otherwise, it's just floating out there.

• (1630)

Mr. Ron Cannan: Okay. I'll move to table this motion, as it's being considered by other committees, more appropriate, I believe, to the motion at hand.

Mr. Peter Julian: This is a trade motion.

The Chair: We have a motion to table, and I'm happy to hear debate on that motion.

Just for clarity, here's where we are. A similar motion is simultaneously before four committees. The suggestion is that it be dealt with by the finance committee and that we table it at this committee until we've heard from the finance committee so we don't have to be redundant.

That is a motion that's on the floor. I'm open to debate.

Mr. Pallister, did you want to begin that debate?

Mr. Brian Pallister: Oh, glory be. Thank you.

Just because I'm not running again, I didn't want my constituents to think I wasn't working for them and other Canadians.

This is a good motion for several reasons. First of all, colleagues, the finance committee has already agreed to undertake this, and has dedicated two meetings to it. I'm all for expressing sympathy to anybody, but the fact is that the families affected by changes in the manufacturing and forestry sector deserve more than plaintive weeping and motions such as this one, which are convoluted at best, and simply designed to gather attention at worst.

The fact of the matter is we have to be effective in representing the Canadian people, and that's what we'll do if we let the finance committee deal with this, as they've already undertaken to do. The industry committee had the same motion brought to them and established that they would not deal with it and that they would have the finance committee deal with it, and then undertake to work effectively in cooperation with their colleagues on that committee.

For us to play with this motion all day is not showing respect for the people to whom we should be showing respect. There are five parts to this motion, gentlemen, dealing with aid; safeguards; anti-dumping; and calling us to undertake a study while we are in the midst of one that we have agreed is our highest priority; and then that we should report this motion.

Now, each of these, on its own, is a complex and technical area that deserves discussion, granted; but for us to do that in this format and to expect this motion to be dealt with effectively in the time we have, and in a real way, is simply ludicrous. We are wasting our time here, and we should simply let the finance committee do the work it has undertaken to do in advance of our meeting today. This calls for us to delay for a very brief time and then to examine what they have decided to do and to build on that, working effectively with our colleagues, rather than trying to piggyback, for what purpose, I do not know.

So I strongly support the idea of tabling this, and let's get on with the work that we should be undertaking to represent the Canadian people effectively.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Pallister.

Mr. André.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy André: What I understand is that the party in power does not have time to waste studying the question of the manufacturing industry. I am very surprised and sorry to hear that. I will not go over it again. Talking about a crisis in the manufacturing sector primarily caused by foreign competition would be a waste of time when trade laws need to be revised? We are sitting on the Standing Committee on International Trade and I am being told that there is no time to study this. I find this hard to understand.

The motion presented to the Standing Committee on Finance is not the same as this one. I have the motions before me. The motion made by Paul Crête at the Standing Committee on Finance talks about Technology Partnerships Canada and certain programs. At the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, it talks about the assistance program for older workers. That is not what we are talking about today, we are talking about international trade. That is the issue before us.

The crisis in the manufacturing sector in relation to foreign trade is a matter of concern to opposition members. You are telling us that this is not an issue, that we are going to talk about Canada-Korea free trade, which will have further impact on the manufacturing sector, and that we are not going to discuss the existing issues? Quebec has lost 150,000 jobs, and the rest of Canada has lost almost as many — I don't know how many — and we are going to talk about the weather? Is that what you're concerned about, as a government?

I'm sorry, but I don't agree with you. I think that this motion is a matter of priority for the committee and that we should vote on it.

● (1635)

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Julian.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Cardin has explained the motion very clearly and has answered all the questions. Obviously he knows exactly what his motion means and would could come out of it.

[English]

So what we have back from the government after that explanation are comments that, if I was partisan, I would be cutting and pasting and mailing out right across western Canada. This is a waste of time, discussions, when 200 Canadian families every single day are losing a breadwinner—200 families over the next 24 hours. That's 10 square city blocks devastated by the lack of action in the manufacturing and forestry sector every single day. So if we delay for five days, Mr. Chair, what's the consequence? Well, 1,000 families lose a breadwinner. That's the consequence.

So we have a motion that deals with trade issues. I see "trade" written six times in the motion—trade measures, trade laws, the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, trade negotiations. This is a trade motion brought to the trade committee, and Conservative members don't want us to take action and want to refer it off to some unknown black hole where Conservative promises go, I imagine.

There is no doubt that we have to take action. There is absolutely no doubt that the House of Commons should be seized with this question.

Mr. Cardin has responded in detail to each and every question offered. So I would say, Mr. Chair, if the Conservatives don't want to spend any more time with this, what the committee should do is vote down the tabling motion, vote the motion through, and let's have the debate in the House of Commons, and let's have this committee take a stand on what is a crisis. Two hundred families today will lose a breadwinner in manufacturing and forestry—200 tomorrow, 200 the next day, 200 the next day—and that crisis is getting worse until this government takes action.

Mr. Chair, we have to take action, and I hope we defeat this tabling motion. I'm sure my Liberal colleagues will be voting to defeat the tabling motion as well, because it's in the interest of the country.

The Chair: Mr. Temelkovski.

Mr. Lui Temelkovski (Oak Ridges—Markham, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We've been going on for over an hour. To find out after an hour that this motion is in front of another committee.... I think it's a little unfair when you know this and you want to move it over there that you wouldn't table this right at the beginning rather than wasting an hour and fifteen minutes. I think we are in support of this in spirit. We would like to hear a little more about the motion, rather than tabling it.

The Chair: Monsieur Cardin, on the tabling motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Are you talking about tabling the motion?

[English]

The Chair: The debate is on the motion to table.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: But there are still some questions that have been asked since I spoke a few minutes ago.

On the question of the tabling motion, as Mr. Allison said, we shouldn't waste time. If the members of this committee care about the situation in the manufacturing and forestry sectors, we have to move ahead faster. To do that, we simply have to introduce this motion, vote on it and send it to Parliament, where the discussion of this subject will be held. That way we will not be wasting time here, in committee, and we can keep on working. The debate will be held with all members of Parliament. We will see at that time who is most sensitive to the situation of these industries.

Earlier, Mr. Cannan spoke about the Canadian International Trade Tribunal. When those people make a decision, they have to strike a balance between the interests of industry and of consumers. That is why we believe that we should systematically accept the recommendations and decisions of the tribunal. I don't think that anyone can disagree with that.

If I refer to what Mr. Pallister said, this is a good motion. We are starting a new year, so let's make a good resolution and pass this motion, and send it to the House so that all members of Parliament can be involved in a debate on this subject. We cannot rely on other committees to deal with this issue if we do not know the nature of the work they are going to do on it. Let us take responsibility and demonstrate that we are sensitive to the forestry and manufacturing sectors.

● (1640)

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Monsieur Cardin.

Mr. Dhaliwal.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton—North Delta, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank each and every member who spoke on this. They have a lot more experience on this particular committee than I do.

But I would like to make a minor change. It's the "recommendations" part that we were trying to clear with Mr. Cardin. Can I make a very—

The Chair: No. We're debating a tabling motion. It's a motion to table. When we've dealt with that motion you can come back to the original motion.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Let me speak on that, then.

I'm not going to support tabling this. Subsequently I'm going to make a friendly amendment to change "recommendations" to "decisions". I would be able to support that motion.

The Chair: I see. We'll come back to that, if and when we get back to the motion.

We are debating the tabling of the motion. I have no further speakers. We'll call the question on the motion to table.

Mr. Peter Julian: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Welcome back. We've called the motion.

Mr. Peter Julian: I'm multi-tasking, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Let me bring the committee up to speed. We are in the middle of a vote. We have called the question. The question is whether we shall table the motion.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Do you want to vote on the tabling motion or make a decision today?

[English]

The Chair: The motion is to table your motion until we have heard from the finance committee, who dealt with this yesterday. That's what the debate has been about for the last 15 minutes.

I think there may have been some confusion there. We'll continue with the vote.

(Motion negated)

● (1645)

The Chair: We are now resuming debate on Monsieur Cardin's motion, and Mr. Dhaliwal has the floor.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to make a friendly amendment to this motion to delete the word "recommendations" and insert "decisions".

The Chair: Monsieur Cardin, we have a request for a friendly amendment so we don't have to go through a vote, if you would simply change the word "recommendations" in the English version, on the fifth line, to "decisions". On the sixth line, in French, *recommandations* is changed to *décisions*.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Yes, that's fine.

[English]

The Chair: We have an agreement on a friendly amendment. The motion would now include trade measures where they systematically implement the "decisions" of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal. That's what we're dealing with.

The debate resumes on the amended motion. Is there any further debate on the motion?

Mr. Cannan.

Mr. Ron Cannan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I don't know if the analyst, or anybody, can clarify this, but by making this motion it's my understanding it will systematically implement the decisions of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal. The unelected trade tribunal would be making decisions. That takes away from the elected officials. The government wouldn't have an ability to make a decision. Our flexibility would be taken away because the tribunal would be making that decision. We'd have no flexibility, as a government, whoever the government is.

That's my understanding. Would anybody be able to answer that? I would like the opposition to realize the amendment is that we're taking away the flexibility of the government to be able to decide on a case-by-case basis and allowing the balance between, as I mentioned before, industry and consumers. We're allowing this unelected tribunal to take away any decision of the elected officials.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Cannan.

Mr. Pallister.

Mr. Brian Pallister: Again, for us as a committee to adopt recommendations that would go to the House and be reported to the House that dramatically change the nature of how we do our trade policy as a country and how we have done it under successive governments is ill-considered.

For example, on the issue my colleague just spoke of, in respect of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal and safeguards, these are complex areas that require latitude in terms of decision-making. For us to come out with a recommendation as a trade committee suggesting that every size is the same and one size fits all, in dealing with trade issues as complex as these, is demeaning to our committee and to the respect we deserve to have as a committee.

Secondly, on the issue of bringing Canada's trade laws in line with those of the United States and the European Union, which I am interested in, with all the attempts that are made on a regular basis to link the government with George Bush's Republican demons, that we would now be seeing a recommendation coming that proposes we should adopt the policies of the United States government when it comes to the issues of anti-dumping.... These as well are more restrictive than our own policies in some ways and in fact are a rather significant proposal to be attempting to deal with in a two-hour session of our committee.

Finally, on the issue of carrying out open and thorough studies, again, we have determined what our priorities are as a committee. We are in the midst of studying a very important issue, which we can do, I hope, with some significant outcomes in a cooperative way, and which I hope will carry some weight. But it always concerns me when I see resolutions such as this that attempt to do everything in a few short sentences out of an expressed desire for compassion and to demonstrate compassion, which when one considers the detail of them would not achieve those compassionate goals that are supposed to be linked to this motion.

I would suggest to my colleagues that were this a genuine crisis that they are describing.... The NDP member consistently refers to statistics, which I would invite him to table at this committee, about job loss. Of course failing to mention that Quebec unemployment is at a 30-year low, he fails to pay respect to the workers of Quebec and

of other parts of the country who have shown the ability to find work and who pursue other opportunities on a regular basis and have done so for a long time. He shows disrespect for them when he attempts to inflate the concerns that he has at their expense. These are Canadians, who like Canadians across the country have been able to find employment in record numbers and are doing it.

If the members wish to deal with this issue in a meaningful way, there are a number of other avenues for them to do so. They could propose an opposition day. They have. The government has given the opportunity for opposition parties to have opposition days, seven in the next six weeks, if I'm not mistaken, and there would be a great opportunity to fully debate this issue in an intelligent way at that point. Also, they could propose an emergency debate as well, and there are other avenues available to them through private members' work and so on.

Here we are being asked to essentially approve a motion that addresses several areas of very complex trade policy without background documents, without hearing witnesses. And I'm surprised again at the NDP member's readiness to rubber-stamp a resolution such as this without hearing from people who would be profoundly affected by this resolution. There are people across this country who have strong views on this, and I'm sure the committee would like to hear from them before it tacitly gives approval to a resolution that proposes to make such dramatic changes in trade policy. This is surprising and I think disrespectful of those who would be affected by such a resolution were it adopted by the government.

So again, if we want to be taken seriously as a committee, we have to do our work, and to do our work effectively we have to work in cooperation with our colleagues in other committees, and we have to have the background on this and the technical answers to the questions that some of my colleagues have already asked on some aspects of this before we should be considering giving approval to such a resolution.

• (1650)

The debate about the amount of aid is fine. I have no trouble with the first provision of the resolution, which suggests somehow that the government's level of aid or support is inadequate. I believe that's the intention of the wording, anyway. I have no trouble with the member bringing the suggestion forward that we should be more generous in our aid programs. I think that's fine; I think that's a debate we could have.

But these other provisions that are in the resolution here today are, as I've said, highly complex and profoundly require us to consider the impact they will have on other Canadians and on the Canadian industrial manufacturing sector—and others, because they do not stop exclusively at the impact they would have on those sectors. Rather, they would impact significantly, if adopted, upon many other sectors of the economy as well.

In attempting to show a concern—a genuine concern, I have no doubt—for the people of this country impacted by changes in manufacturing employment and in the forestry sector in particular, I think the member has in this resolution shown a bit of disrespect for the very issue he wants to raise; he is asking us to give approval to so many different provisions in this resolution that go so far beyond what his stated desire has been in his preamble to this particular motion. His stated desire was to give voice to the concerns he has about the employment “crisis”, as he calls it, in these sectors. It's quite within his rights to do that.

I would propose an amendment that deletes every word in this resolution after the word “sectors” in the third line of the English version.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Pallister.

We have another motion proposed by way of amendment to the report; that is, that we delete those words occurring after “sector” in the second-last line....

Oh, he wants to end at that “sector”.

Just so we're clear on the amendment, the amendment would delete all words following the word “sectors” in the fourth line of the English version. If this amendment is passed, the motion would read *en anglais*:

Given the seriousness of the crisis rocking the forestry and manufacturing sectors, that the committee recommend that the government introduce as soon as possible an improved aid package for the forestry and manufacturing sectors.

The motion is to delete everything after that.

Is there debate?

Mr. Julian.

● (1655)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Chair, my colleague, Mr. Scissorhands, has never seen a motion he hasn't wanted to cut into pieces. He's cutting out the most essential parts of this motion. I simply don't buy the arguments that he's using to raise this. He is essentially saying that after Mr. Cardin gave us basically about a week's notice to look into this.... We were all supposed to do our homework. We may have had some questions, as Mr. Maloney did, following that. It's normal to bring those to committee. But we all had the opportunity to look into this and to ask questions of Mr. Cardin. So to cut out all those essential trade measures makes absolutely no sense. It's gutting the motion.

I have to say, I'm pretty appalled, Mr. Chair. What we have is a Conservative government that last year put in place, on October 12, the softwood sellout. The softwood industry basically blew up, exploded after that; 10,000 jobs were lost as a direct result of imposing those punitive tariffs at the border. The government was well aware of the consequences of that, even though we had won. We had won in the U.S. Court of International Trade, so we had passed that final step. What the government had was four aces, and they folded, and gave away all of the money, a billion bucks, and 10,000 jobs.

So now we have Mr. Cardin bringing a motion forward to address that, and we have my colleague, Mr. Scissorhands—Mr. Pallister—saying about the people who are unemployed, the 200 families

losing a breadwinner every day, that it's somehow their fault they're unemployed, that somehow Mr. Cardin is showing disrespect by identifying this problem and wanting to take action.

If I were a partisan person, Mr. Chair, I would be taking those blues and going through the Conservative comments. There are lots of juicy little quotes that in British Columbia would turn people absolutely ballistic that the government would say such things—that this motion is a waste of time, that it's the people's own fault that they're unemployed—when it is the government that put the softwood sellout into effect.

So, no, I'm certainly not voting for this amendment. I think it's silly. It certainly wastes some time of the committee, and it cuts out some of the most essential parts of the recommendations, including the fact that this committee is recommending these measures to the House, so in Parliament we can have this debate, where it should be held.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Julian.

Is there further debate on the proposed amendment?

Mr. Miller.

Mr. Larry Miller: I'm obviously going to be supporting this.

The Chair: Excuse me just a moment.

I asked if there was further debate.

Do you wish further debate on the amendment, Monsieur Cardin?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: I want to debate it. My friend may want to call the vote. In any event, I am ready, Mr. Chair.

I would like to give Mr. Pallister high marks.

● (1700)

[English]

The Chair: We're asking for debate. Do you wish to debate the amendment?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Yes, that will allow me to reply to Mr. Pallister, who moved the amendment.

I want to congratulate Mr. Pallister for one thing, that being his eloquence. He has succeeded in persuading us that there are industries that could be harmed. I assume he was referring to the fishing industry, given all the red herrings he has thrown out. He talked about opposition days, but he left without giving us the calendar. Are there going to be any? There are none scheduled by the government at this point, and I don't think it is going to be anytime soon.

I think that this is really an attempt to avoid debate about the forestry and manufacturing industries. If the government doesn't want to hold opposition days, my colleagues in the opposition, and even some in the government, would probably be prepared to pass my motion, including the corrections made by my Liberal colleagues.

Obviously I am going to vote against this amendment.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Miller.

Mr. Larry Miller: Kevin Costner, move over; Peter Julian is on his way. You missed your calling, Mr. Julian.

Mr. Chair, I'm obviously going to be supporting this amendment. I think that Mr. Pallister and members of the committee here from the government side are trying to be non-partisan and make this work. I know those are strange words to Mr. Julian and some of the opposition members.

It still speaks to the main part of Mr. Cardin's motion, and what have you. Obviously the last part of his motion deals with things that other committees are.... I think they call that, in plain English or plain French, duplication. I'm not sure what the word is in French. Quite often governments are criticized for duplication. I wasn't aware when I came here today that this was before another committee, and maybe more. I think that to continue that type of stuff is simply that. We should wait 24 or 48 hours and hear what possibly comes out of that.

I'm opposed to this. I think this is a compromise. I'll certainly be expecting opposition support for it.

The Chair: Is there any further debate on the motion?

Monsieur André.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy André: I believe, as has already been said, that the government doesn't want to do anything on this issue, because if we agree to Mr. Pallister's amendment, we are eliminating the entire aspect of international trade, and that is the reason why we are here. This is quite simply a motion that should be presented to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. The international aspect is important when we are talking about competition in the manufacturing sector and the resulting job losses. I cannot vote for your amendment, Mr. Pallister. I want to deal with the international trade issue.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.)): Is there any further discussion on Mr. Pallister's amendment?

Mr. Cannan.

Mr. Ron Cannan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to elaborate on a couple more points. First of all, I fully support the spirit intended in this amended motion from the fact that forestry is a significant economic generator for British Columbia, as members around the table know who are from B.C. and of course from those communities across the country.

There are a couple of other extenuating circumstances that are beyond government's control, specifically in British Columbia. We're supposed to lose about 78%—this was the figure I heard yesterday from Premier Campbell—of our pine forest due to the pine beetle. That's obviously created all kinds of havoc for the industry. As we mentioned around the table, the high dollar has been a triple whammy. The hat trick portion is the housing market going down about 25% in the U.S. Those are circumstances that are extenuating,

and obviously the softwood lumber agreement has mitigated the damage to some of our Canadian forest industries.

There's been a lot of retooling. People are re-equipping. I've had the chance to visit some of the mills, and those that have re-equipped and re-invested and found markets that are going to help them stay competitive and sustainable into the future....

I really support the fact that we need to be cognizant of the downturn of the forestry and also the manufacturing. I've got the largest private boat manufacturer in Canada. Campion produces about 1,000 boats. I've toured their facility and am working with that industry as well because it's been affected by the increased dollar.

I'm fully supportive of doing all we can as a government to help during these difficult times, and as alluded to, we have sectors of the economy that are very bullish. One of the big challenges in my riding is that other employers don't have enough people. So we have a shortage of skilled labour. There is work available with certain industries, and there are definitely certain pockets of the economy that are being challenged.

I think that by supporting this motion we can work together as all elected officials to see that our men and women out there throughout the country will have food on their table and are not going to be laid off and lose jobs. We do have some challenges ahead, but we do have great opportunities, so I support the motion.

•(1705)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. John Maloney): Is there further comment?

Mr. Cardin.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy André: I call the vote on Mr. Pallister's amendment.

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Mr. John Maloney): Is there no further discussion?

(Amendment negated)

The Vice-Chair (Mr. John Maloney): Members of the committee, we're back to the main motion.

I ask that the banter and the chatter that's going on across the way be toned down out of respect for the comments being made by individuals recognized by the chair. I think it's getting a little bit out of order.

Let's get on with this, as the time is creeping. Let's continue.

Mr. Julian.

Mr. Peter Julian: I call the vote on the main motion, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. John Maloney): Just a minute. Mr. Bains would like further discussion on it.

Hon. Navdeep Bains: I want to speak to the suggestion made by my colleague, because I believe that's still up for debate. He made a friendly amendment to make a change with respect to the word "recommendations". He suggested that we use the word "decisions", in light of the fact this is a reflection of the discussion we had before, where we asked what recommendations Monsieur Cardin was referring to. Monsieur Guy also indicated there were specific cases around anti-dumping measures on bicycles or the furniture industry. So that is still up for debate.

I want to make an additional friendly amendment to that. As opposed to using the words "systematically implement", I suggest we use the words "systematically consider". That speaks to the concerns raised by the government with respect to flexibility and Mr. Pallister's comment that one size does not fit all and that there are some unique circumstance in each decision made. I think this will allow the government to have that latitude. In the spirit of cooperation, I think we've debated this extensively, and I think we need some sort of resolution or conclusion to this debate.

The friendly amendment I'm proposing is that we delete the word "implement" and substitute the word "consider". The previous recommendation, or friendly amendment, made by Monsieur Dhaliwal was to take out the word "recommendations" and replace it with the word "decisions".

One is presently under debate. I'm making a friendly amendment to that, in the spirit of cooperation, in light of the time.

• (1710)

The Chair: Monsieur Cardin, as the mover of the motion, are you prepared to accept a friendly amendment to change the word "implement" to "consider"?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Like my colleague, I would like to clarify. First, the name of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal should perhaps be changed, because in my opinion politicians can't interfere in a decision by any other judicial or civil tribunal, and ordinarily the decisions can be enforced. I would therefore ask for my colleague to clarify.

How does he understand this? What happens when the tribunal makes a decision about something, in accordance with measures that the government itself has adopted, for determining whether there is dumping going on, for example? It is the government that has established the measures for identifying it, and the tribunal makes a decision or recommendation using the tools available to it. What does he think about implementing the decisions or recommendations? How much latitude can the government have in respect of the decisions of a tribunal that has relied on things that the government has adopted?

I would like Mr. Bains to clarify this for me a bit.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

I just thought we might go for a little clarification. I appreciate what you're trying to do here, but I think you're misinterpreting the role of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal. I don't think they make decisions. They have findings, they have....

Go ahead, Mr. Bains.

Hon. Navdeep Bains: I obviously didn't want to counter the point made by my colleague, but the reason I think he said that was because earlier on, when this debate started, Chair, we asked for specific recommendations, and we weren't getting clarity on that. I think that's what prompted the suggested change. So if there's a technical term that's more appropriate, I think we're willing to go with that. The intent is still the same. We want clarification on what "recommendation" is. If that refers to the fact that the trade tribunal makes recommendations as opposed to decisions, that's fine. That's all we want clarification on. That's point one.

The second point I've made with respect to the word "consider" is simply to come to terms with this motion so we can get all parties to agree on it. That was my intent. I've said from the outset that I understand the intent and the spirit of this motion. I understand the urgency with respect to Monsieur Cardin's concerns. So I'm not here to try in any way, shape, or form to compromise his position. I'm just trying to come to some sort of consensus on this particular motion so we can proceed with other issues.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Pallister.

Mr. Brian Pallister: First of all, I'm not clear on whether Mr. Cardin has accepted the friendly amendment. If he has not, which I take from his comments he has not, then I would ask if it is in the form of an amendment that Mr. Bains is now proposing, and if so, I would like to speak to the amendment.

The Chair: Could I ask Monsieur Cardin, and I think you could limit it to one word, whether you are accepting the friendly amendment?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: The expression "consider" was not a very good choice, but...

[English]

The Chair: It's a one-word change.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Yes.

[English]

The Chair: Do I take it that you're not accepting it, then?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Yes, yes.

[English]

The Chair: Okay, fine. Then your friendly amendment—

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Yes, I'm accepting it.

• (1715)

[English]

The Chair: Oh, you are going to accept it. Okay.

Go on, Mr. Pallister.

Mr. Brian Pallister: Well, if it's accepted, that's good, because it does change the wording in a way that allows Monsieur Cardin to make the emphasis he is wanting to make in urging the government to consider the decisions of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal without fundamentally changing the nature of the relationship between the Canadian International Trade Tribunal and the government, which in this case is the Minister of Finance.

The wording as it was prior to this time—"implement"—would have had our committee instructing the Government of Canada to fundamentally change that relationship from one in which the minister of the crown had the option to act, or not, on the recommendations or to follow some other course of action, to one in which he would have been requested by us to implement all recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, which we could not support. I'm pleased that Monsieur Cardin has accepted that friendly amendment, because I think it's constructive.

Rather than ask a question, I guess I should propose an amendment then, which is to eliminate the word "systematically", because I'm not sure what the purpose of the word "systematically" is. How does one systematically consider something? I'm not sure. So I would just propose that we delete the word "systematically". In my copy, it's in the fourth line.

The Chair: Again, it's proposing that the friendly amendment... Mr. Julian, are you going to accept that?

Mr. Brian Pallister: Mr. Julian isn't the mover, so it doesn't matter if he accepts it.

The Chair: Well, he's calling the shots.

Mr. Brian Pallister: No, it's Mr. Cardin I'm concerned about.

The Chair: Go ahead, Monsieur Cardin.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: I have to tell you, Mr. Chair, that the word "consider"... In fact, I had understood that it had been removed. We are ready to vote.

A voice: Our intentions are good.

[English]

Mr. Larry Miller: So it now reads "considered".

The Chair: We have a speakers list and we'll carry on.

We have a friendly amendment that now reads "consider the decisions of the Canadian Trade Tribunal".

Can I beg the indulgence of the committee for one moment? I don't have sufficient background to determine whether or not the Canadian International Trade Tribunal actually makes decisions. I don't think they make decisions; they have findings—

Hon. Navdeep Bains: We've gone back to "recommendations".

The Chair: So you've gone back to "recommendations"?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Given the perception, it could be "recommendations". It recommends that duty be charged. The fact remains that the recommendation made to the government is a decision by the tribunal, which has studied the matter.

The expression "decision and/or recommendation" would also work, but it would be preferable to say "recommendations".

[English]

The Chair: Can I ask the mover of that amendment and the acceptance of it—what do you want to decide on?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: That's fine.

The Chair: Are you going with "recommendations"?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Yes. Take "systematically" out and put "consider" in. That's fine.

The Chair: It says now, after forestry sectors, "consider the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal".

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair: Great. We can resume debate.

We have a speakers list, Mr. Pallister. The next on the list is Mr. Julian, oddly enough.

Mr. Peter Julian: I call the question, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: You can't call the question.

Mr. Peter Julian: Yes, I can.

The Chair: No, you can't.

Mr. Peter Julian: On a point of order, as a member of the committee I have the right to call the question, and as chair you have the responsibility to test this committee to see if we're ready to move to the question. So by calling the question I'm asking you to consult the members of the committee by a vote as to whether or not we're ready to finally vote on the motion.

And that's procedure, which isn't in your little 200-page Conservative dirty tricks book.

● (1720)

The Chair: Mr. Miller.

Mr. Larry Miller: I believe there is some correctness in what Mr. Julian just said. However, at the same time, when you're just about to vote on a question, even at the request of that member, I believe that when another individual of the committee suggests that he or she may have an amendment, which Mr. Pallister did, that would take precedence over it.

Mr. Peter Julian: Point of order, Mr. Chair. I called the question prior to the amendment.

The Chair: I've just asked the clerk for clarification on the order of proceedings here. I am told, as it is my understanding, that in committee you cannot call the question while there is still a speakers list. We still have four people on the speakers list. I'll ask the clerk for clarification.

[Translation]

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Jacques Lahaie): As the Chair has just explained, as long as there are members who wish to discuss the question on the orders of the day, there is no time limit on speaking. He has to follow the list.

[English]

The previous question is not allowed in committee.

The Chair: Mr. Pallister.

Mr. Brian Pallister: I have a question on procedure.

It is my understanding that we don't go back. If there's an amendment, that takes precedence over the speakers list on the motion itself. In other words, I would like to propose an amendment, so can I not do that? Why do I have to wait until we go back to the speakers list for the main motion, when in fact I wish to propose an amendment to the main motion? Don't amendments take precedence over debating the main motion?

The Clerk: Yes. You have to be recognized by the chair to put that forward.

Mr. Brian Pallister: Oh, that's the trick.

A voice: And we have names in front of yours.

Mr. Brian Pallister: Yes, but that's for the main motion, and I have an amendment.

The Chair: Mr. Pallister, you have the floor.

Mr. Brian Pallister: Thank you. I would propose that we delete the words "especially those regarding safeguards" after the word "tribunal".

The reason should be self-evident. We have in the previous sentence instructed the House of Commons to "consider the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal". If we have instructed in that manner, why would we then go on to say "especially" something? What sense does that make? That is like saying: "No animals allowed in my restaurant, especially dogs." What sense is there in that?

Let's simply clarify the wording here. It makes no sense to give instruction like that and then say "especially" something after that.

So I am moving that amendment, and I would like to speak to it at length, Mr. Chair.

An hon. member: Take a vote.

Mr. Brian Pallister: I firmly believe this is a commonsense amendment that I am proposing and I hope there's enough common sense on my colleagues' part that we could just clean up the language a bit here.

It is like a farmer I ran into one time in my business. Mr. Temelkovski can relate to this. He did a will and said, "I'm leaving the farm to my daughter on condition that she leave the guy she's married to." You can't impose things like.

This is saying that we should consider the recommendations of the Canadian International Trade Tribunal; then we're saying "especially" some of them. This just doesn't make any sense.

If you guys are going to go with me on that, I'll stop talking, and let's get with it. But I am sure my colleagues would want to expand on this at length.

● (1725)

The Chair: We have an amendment before us. Is there any continued debate on Mr. Pallister's amendment to delete the words "especially those regarding safeguards"?

If there is no further debate, then I am going to call for the motion.

Mr. Cardin?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: That's fine.

[English]

The Chair: Okay, we are back to the amendment of Mr. Pallister, which would delete the words "especially those regarding safeguards".

(Amendment agreed to)

The Chair: We are resuming debate on the original motion. We have on the speakers list Mr. Dhaliwal, Mr. Maloney, and Mr. Pallister.

Mr. Dhaliwal.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: I am fine with Brian Pallister's motion to systematically delete, and I think I have done it. So I would be willing to—

An hon. member: We're past that now.

The Chair: We are back on the original motion.

Is there no further debate?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: No.

The Chair: Mr. Maloney.

Mr. John Maloney: Mr. Chair, I think there is an obvious consensus that members of the opposition will support some type of rendition of this motion. Also, the government are opposed to it. But the reality is that this is a recommendation to the government; it is not binding the government. The opposition is trying to send a message to the government that they are very concerned about the issues in this motion. I would suggest that, because there is no binding effect, the government.... We are recommending that they consider.

Why don't we just get on with it and get over the semantics? We're going to sit here all night and at the next meeting debating little words here and there, but eventually there will be a motion that will come forward and that will be acceptable to the opposition but has no binding effect. Why don't we just get over it?

The Chair: Let's hold on a minute.

Hon. Navdeep Bains: No. And by the way, it's different. We've seen them now.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Leave it to the chair.

The Chair: Monsieur Cardin.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cardin: As Mr. Maloney did when he had the opportunity to chair, I would like to ask everyone to kindly not talk at the same time. We have to consider the interpreters who have to translate it all. When there are discussions like this where absolutely nothing can be understood, we can't even get things translated and we may be missing something.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

I guess that was a point of order.

Mr. Cannan.

We'll have to resume this at the next meeting.

Mr. Ron Cannan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate Mr. Maloney's comments.

● (1730)

The Chair: I think there's a vote. I think we have to adjourn.

The meeting is adjourned.

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