

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Skeena has been designated to the Davie Shipbuilding Company of Lauzon, Quebec?

According to Mr. Speaker, this question should have been put on the order paper. I felt otherwise, I felt it was really urgent to the people concerned. I tried to point out to Mr. Speaker that it should be allowed on this occasion because it was so serious. The reasons I gave were, the high employment rate on the west coast as a result of the large wheat sale, and the grain handling involved—I will come to that a little later. Then I pointed out that the Quebec yards have already received recently several large shipbuilding contracts; that cut-backs in defence contracts have resulted in substantial lay-offs in many areas of my province of Nova Scotia and our shipyards have suffered greatly from cancellation of the general purpose frigate program.

I was not successful in putting my original question, but had I been I would have liked to pose a supplementary to the minister in this manner. In view of the fact that four of the five conversion contracts have been designated to west coast shipyards and the fifth to a Quebec shipyard, would the minister assure the house that the remaining two jobs would be designated for shipyards in the Atlantic provinces? As I understand it, seven ships in all are going to have conversion jobs, or I should say the balance of five. I understand that two, the *Assiniboia* and the *St. Laurent* have been converted on the west coast. The *Saguenay* and the *Ottawa* are now undergoing conversion in Pacific coast yards.

It has been suggested in a newspaper item within the last few days that the *Margaree* is scheduled also to go to Pacific coast yards. What prompted my question was a newspaper item that the *Skeena* was probably going to the Davie Shipbuilding yard in Quebec. This would leave one, the *Fraser*, which as I understand it, has not been allocated anywhere as yet.

I should like to point out to the minister how important these contracts are to the shipyards and to our economy on the east coast at the moment. We have not had any of these jobs to do. As I have just pointed out, the other yards have been quite busy.

We should like to get a share of the work that is going. These cutbacks have been most serious, not only in this field about which I am talking at the moment, but we have had cut-backs at H.M.C.S. *Cornwallis*; cut-backs at Fairey Aviation Limited, Dartmouth; cut-backs at Enamel and Heating at Amherst; cut-backs at Enamel and Heating, Charlotte-

town and in my own constituency lay-offs are occurring weekly at Point Edward naval base, and apparently this base will close completely before this government is finished; cut-backs at the Beaverbank radar base in Nova Scotia; cut-backs at the Greenwood air base. Then, of course, there has been the general frigate program cancellation. The result of a lot of these naval cut-backs, for instance, has been a lack of work for the North Sydney and Marine Railway and the Sydney Engineering and Drydock. They have not been able to get any refit contracts.

Then, I should like to refer to a few of the headlines that have appeared only today in the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*. We see headlines like these, "Plane Phase-Out Ends Defence Job for P.E.I."; another one reads, "No Hope for Defence Work". This relates to information given in reply to a question by the hon. member for Queens (Mr. Macquarrie) by the defence production minister. Another headline reads, "Neptune Refits Dropped; Bitter Blow for Fairey". I quote part of the article:

Fairey Canada Ltd., the Dartmouth aviation company has suffered what one employee called "another bitter blow".

Since this government has taken office, Mr. Speaker, we have suffered a series of cut-backs, lay-offs, obliterations, annihilations, abortive methods, cancellations, postponements, and slashes in defence spending, particularly in the last number of months. Where is it going to stop? It is a very serious situation economically, and we must have something to replace this lack of employment.

According to a Canadian Press item appearing in the *Cape Breton Post* on July 10, there is a report of a meeting of the Halifax-Dartmouth and district labour council in which it is stated that one delegate said at this meeting:

"If Drury and Hellyer have their way there will be no defence contracts left in Nova Scotia."

Is it any wonder that a statement of that nature has been made? I understand strong protests have been sent to the minister and I would hope he would try to assist in this situation. I would plead with him and the government to get cracking and do something on behalf of the Halifax shipyards and the Saint John drydock, so that one of these remaining conversion jobs may be directed to each of these yards, through negotiations or whatever means are necessary.

When he replies I hope the minister will be able to give us some encouragement because the cancellation of any of these projects