

can put our products at tide water at a price level that is competitive with other countries.

We must never forget that over 30 per cent of our GNP comes from trade with other nations. Every time we spend \$10, \$3 of it has come from other countries. If we do not remain competitive with those other countries we will lose that \$3 and our standard of living could drop by 30 per cent to 50 per cent practically overnight if we do not keep our transportation system running efficiently.

• (1120)

The third principle is that we need greater reliance on market forces and less reliance on economic regulation, a situation that will lead to more innovation and more enterprise, and a more competitive transportation system, both intramodally and intermodally. As a result of past regulation, competition within the various modes and certainly between the various modes has been distorted. This Bill would go a long way toward lessening that regulation-caused distortion.

Another principle is that, whenever necessary, the public interest must be protected through continued economic regulation. That is truer in the North than anywhere else, where there is a much smaller population, and more fragile markets. The Government has accepted the principle that we need to continue regulation in the North.

Wherever there is going to be regulation, another principle of the Bill is that it should be open, accessible, and not costly. All of us have had the occasion to talk to companies which have almost gone bankrupt as a result of bringing applications before the CTC in an effort to bring about more efficient and wider-ranging operations. That is just not the way regulation should operate. Under this Bill, the cost of regulation will be very much reduced.

Widespread consultation with all interested parties has produced a balanced package of reforms, a package which will best serve the needs of shippers and travellers while at the same time providing a good economic climate for efficient well-managed carriers.

Under this Bill, there are no losers. This Bill is clearly a win-win situation.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Government has taken the easy way out. Once again, it has preferred to cut short debate instead of facing the widespread criticism of this Bill. Once again, it has decided to gag the Opposition. The Government has made a nasty habit of this. It imposed closure to pass a Bill that would benefit the oil multinationals. It imposed closure to pass a Bill that would benefit the multinational drug companies. And now, it is imposing closure for a Bill that is definitely biased towards this country's major shippers.

Mr. Speaker, I maintain that because we are talking about deregulation of our transportation industry, the Government's

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decision is entirely unacceptable. I agree that the transportation industry is of vital importance to the development of the Canadian economy. That is why we say the Government should have consulted more and listened to those who testified against this Bill before the various parliamentary committees, instead of listening only to associations controlled by the big rich shippers, as the Government did. It should listen to the small shippers from the Maritimes and Western Canada who told us, for instance, that confidential contracts on domestic traffic might make them go out of business.

The Government should have listened to the unions that pointed out how many jobs would be lost in the industry if the Government persisted in its single-minded pursuit of deregulation.

The Government should have listened to professionals in the aviation industry, included pilots and others, who testified before the Transport Committee and told us in no uncertain terms that deregulation would unavoidably lead to a reduction in the quality of service and, even more important, in safety.

Representatives of the railway sector—both Canadian National and Canadian Pacific—told the Government that Bill C-18 was a threat to their survival.

[*English*]

The railroads told us that by opening up the Canadian market to competition from the American railways we would be reducing revenues, and investment in equipment and plant would suffer, leading in turn to a reduction in service and safety.

Did this Government listen? No, not at all.

[*Translation*]

Instead, he decided to set totally unrealistic deadlines, both for the Committee when it was considering the White Paper "Freedom to Move" and during consideration of Bill C-18 itself. Even now, at the report and third reading stage, we are still being saddled with absolutely unacceptable deadlines. The Government has systematically opted for closure just to please a few big Canadian shippers.

This Government has no regard for the democratic consultation process. Even worse, the transportation industry and thousands of Canadian workers will pay dearly for the Conservative Government's total lack of concern.

Mr. Speaker, when revising a general act that is so fundamental to the socio-economic well being of this country, the Government should have taken a more thoughtful approach.

During the debate on second reading, we in the Official Opposition, we in the Liberal Party said that considering the changes being sought, the Government could at least have taken steps to measure the impact of deregulation on such areas as: traveller safety; consumers, especially in connection with air transportation rates; employment in the industry; acceptable levels of foreign control; and finally, impact on regional development.