

*Maritime Code*

● (1730)

There are few people who have said that they would like to establish a Canadian flag fleet on our coastal waters if it were going to mean that the communities there would have to pay the total price of having those ships and Canadian crews operating in competition with foreign vessels. Most people are well aware that if we in Canada are going to enjoy the advantages, we will have to pay the price. Obviously considering the moneys and benefits we would receive from having our own shipbuilding industry again, and from having the capacity to go into international shipping as the need arises, there has to be a price tag, but I think the Canadian people would be willing to pay.

I was very surprised that the government in this bill did not at least have the Canadian Labour Code attach to all ships. We are well aware of the fact that there are Koreans, Portuguese, those flying under the Panamanian flag, the Liberian flag and all the other flags of convenience who are receiving very low wages. By the standards of this country they are paid considerably less than our minimum standard. These people are working in conditions which are well below the standards demanded in Canadian ships, which include standards for the safety of the crew, the safety of the ship, navigation facilities, and all the other requirements. Yet the government was not willing to apply that section of the Labour Code which would have ensured that any ship operating under Canadian licence would have to meet the Canadian labour standards. That would have provided Canadian operators with the opportunity to compete on a more equitable basis with the foreign ships of convenience which are now often in the coastal trade of Canada.

There are problems which would develop from having a totally Canadian owned shipping industry. Restrictions often have odd effects, and one of those effects would be on the west coast where large cruise ships are going up and down the coast between the mainland of the United States and Alaska. They call at ports in British Columbia, mainly for convenience, and pick up passengers at one Canadian port and drop them off at another Canadian port, or pick them up at a Canadian port and drop them off at the destination of the ship. This service is operating and would obviously have to be an exception until we are able to develop a replacement coastal service.

No one objects to small exceptions, but I think it is a shame that we are going to operate on the basis of licences which will not be the exception but which will be the general rule for much of the shipping in the coastal area. We are going to issue those licences without demanding that any Canadian requirements attach to them. I think this is the weakness of this legislation. It has been hailed by many as a step in the right direction, and I think it is. By this legislation we will be able to overcome some of the problems we did not have when designations of terms were used. For instance the word "ship" has now been applied to things like floating derricks, oil drilling rigs, and other facilities which are now used off our coasts. They are not necessarily self-propelled and are not movable in the sense that the term "ship" had previously been used. I think this is really worth while.

In this legislation we have eliminated the very stringent requirements there were under the Arctic waters protec-

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tion legislation in which we demanded that all shipping be totally under the control of Canadians, and also in which anyone operating in that area must do so by applying all the protection Canadians demand of themselves, and that things like Canadian standards must apply to crews in that area as well. It seems odd, in looking at the Arctic waters protection legislation, that we as members of parliament were faced with a new problem. We were faced with a problem that was very young in nature but was growing very rapidly and was of considerable importance to the economy of Canada. The Arctic waters protection legislation was designed in such a way as to give maximum protection to Canadian interests in an area where Canadian interests are of primary importance and where already there were a number of other interests likely to have a continuing effect. I think that really is the direction we intend the new Maritime Code to go.

We want to protect a Canadian industry which, in effect, we do not have at the present time. We want to develop a capacity, which we do not have at the present time, for the building of merchant fleets, and at the same time we want to establish sovereignty and nationalistic aspirations. These are some of the considerations anticipated by the general public, but I am sorry to say that in my opinion these objectives have not been met. Many of them have been written in such a way that they will be considered at a later date, and many of them will be considered far into the future when the situation may have changed drastically.

We are often very dependent on the economic factor rather than on the Canadian sovereignty position most Canadians now want. I am thinking of one instance in which a ferry was going to Newfoundland. The ferry ran into difficulties, and we brought one in. We were able to operate it on a lease basis much more cheaply than we could operate our own because of the wage factor and other considerations. There was great reluctance to go back to the system we had before, and there was a great desire on the part of many people to retain that service which appeared to be cheaper to operate than our own Canadian service.

I think everyone will agree that we do not want to add to the cost of maritime transportation a large sum for developing Canadian Sovereignty, but I think there is a large benefit to be obtained from developing the maritime industry, the shipbuilding industry, and the coastal trade industry. That would provide us with the possibility of developing an international capacity, something which we gave up a long time ago.

It is interesting to consider what some other people have done. Most countries in the world have decided to have a capacity of their own to deliver their export goods, no matter where those goods may go. The Arabs have bought many tankers and have a capacity now which they did not have a few years ago. They decided to buy this capacity simply because they wanted a guarantee that deliveries would be continuous and that those operating the ships would not be able to hold them up for ransom. This was also true of the United States and of almost all other countries, and there is a great desire on the part of the newly developing countries, the Third World countries, to