

Canada Shipping Act

separated out. I think that was naive and unrealistic. Before the life of this Parliament concludes, I would hope that all or most of those comprehensive claims could be settled. That would be my timetable.

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, it was the presentation of the Hon. Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) which prompted me to rise in my place this afternoon. The Hon. Member is opposed to the Bill. I cannot quite understand why that would be the case. Obviously a good deal of thought has gone into it, not only by the present Government but by the previous one. It has been many years since a major amendment has been made to the Canada Shipping Act. I am sure that all the ideas, many of which are of an administrative nature and a technical nature, included in the Bill were not thought up in the last 12 months. My suspicion is that what we have here is a distillation of ideas that have come forward over the period of many years. It is only with the new Government that the deciding factor has been there to present this to Parliament and to make some movement on these important issues. Undoubtedly the previous Government restricted itself to the collection of these ideas, and for that we should be thankful.

The presentation of the Hon. Member for Davenport was similar in many ways to that of the Hon. Member for Cochrane-Superior (Mr. Penner). However, I must admit that the Hon. Member who last spoke was a little more realistic in his approach to life; he was not dead against the Bill, on account of some of the things he said. Sometimes it is evident that the degree of realism in matters affecting the North directly decreases proportionate to the distance from Toronto. It is sometimes surprising—and this is something which we in the North are quite used to—that those good people from Toronto are quite willing to tell us how we should conduct our affairs and run our lives.

I see the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap) who is an expert on northern housing. He would like to tell us how to run our housing policy. However, I cannot be too critical of him because in the recent past he has been extremely helpful.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the Hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap).

Mr. Heap: I would hope the Hon. Member would not neglect to mention that he thanked me for my intervention.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): That is not a point of order.

Mr. Nickerson: I certainly did thank the Hon. Member for Spadina for his intervention in the question of condominiums in the Northwest Territories. As I said before, he and his colleagues in his Party have been extremely helpful, maybe much more helpful than his colleague, the Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood (Ms. McDonald), who would tell us how to administer the system of justice in the North.

Mr. Heap: You are an expert on that.

Mr. Nickerson: I certainly am, I certainly am. I have had a lot of experience with judicial affairs in the recent past, and I am very satisfied with the way that the judicial system operates in the North.

What we have to realize with respect to shipping in the North is that it already exists. General merchandise is already shipped into the North by vessels. In particular, oil and petroleum products are shipped in. The M.V. *Bedford* recently hauled out, after trans-shipment from the M.V. *Arctic*, the first commercial cargo of oil produced in the Arctic. It had brought in refined products from refineries back east. This is a common occurrence. It happens every day. It is not something new. The Northwest Passage is not some pristine wilderness which has never seen a vessel or has never been touched by the hand of man. The people whom I represent and whom the Hon. Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Suluk) represents tell us that they want rules and regulations established pursuant to the Canada Shipping Act and to the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, which will ensure that existing shipping and any new shipping likely to occur in the future is done in the safest possible manner. They themselves and their loved ones work on those boats. What could be more natural than to want working conditions to be as safe as possible in waters which on occasion can be quite hazardous? The people there are concerned with the possibility of oil spills. They want legislation such as that envisaged in Bill C-75, which will do the utmost possible to ensure that spills do not occur and, if they do, to ensure that there is proper mechanisms for the clean-up of spills and for compensation or the payment of the clean-up process. That is what they want, and that is what is in the Bill. It is unbelievable that the Hon. Member for Davenport should rise and say that we should not proceed with the Bill, that somehow all shipping in the North has to cease. That type of attitude might get him elected in downtown Toronto, but it certainly would not get him elected in Nunatsiak or the Western Arctic.

For example, the Hon. Member for Davenport specifically referred to the transportation of natural gas. This Bill ensures that the international conventions into which Canada has entered, dealing with the design and construction of natural gas carrying vessels, are put into effect. That is not the case at the present time, and this is precisely what the Bill would do. Therefore, we should support the Bill, get it through the House and have these highly technical matters dealt with by a competent legislative committee.

I want to dwell for some time on Clause 4 of the Bill, the one which has probably caused most of the debate in the House. It is permissive. It allows the Minister, should he wish, to collect certain fees for certain services rendered by the Coast Guard in respect of ice-breaking, for instance, and of other services rendered to the shipping community by the Government of Canada.

I understand some of the concern of Members from certain parts of the country where there is a likelihood of fees being substantially raised. However, we have had the assurance of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) that this will