

*Canada Shipping Act*

I should like to refer to the stubbornness which is being demonstrated by the Minister of Transport. The Minister has earned—and to some extent he deserves it—a reputation as a fairly competent fellow. I think that reputation is going to his head in the same way as the Government's majority has gone to the head of the Prime Minister. Notwithstanding representations, he continues with Bill C-75. That stubborn streak ignores the views of the people of Canada and the views of parliamentarians in almost every Party. It is the same stubborn streak which has given rise to the situation within the shipping assets of the Government of Canada. Be they Coast Guard ships, DND ships, marine ships or freighters, there is a policy which says that employees on ships in Atlantic Canada should be paid less than those on the West Coast. I am referring to employees with the same job classification and doing exactly the same job. An employee in the same position in Atlantic Canada receives \$4,000 to \$5,000 less in salary than an individual in the same job, with the same classification, working on a ship along the West Coast of Canada. That situation exists today.

We have brought that discrepancy to the attention of the Minister. It is so ridiculous and so heart-rending that employees on the West Coast, from the great Province of British Columbia, who are recipients of the higher wages, joined with their brothers from Atlantic Canada in Ottawa to say that the discrepancy was unfair, unreasonable, and must be stopped. They displayed generosity, sincerity, and a desire to share in the carrying of each other's load. They were committed to the principle that we are our brother's keeper. Notwithstanding that, the Government of Canada turned a blind eye. The Government is saying that those ship employees who ply the Atlantic waters and work, by the admission of employees from western Canada, longer hours and in more difficult conditions are somehow, for some inexplicable reason, second-class citizens. All of us believe that our citizenship entitles us to exactly the same treatment no matter where we live.

It is that kind of stubbornness, pigheadedness, and insensitivity to the plight of our fellow Canadians which persists in Bill C-75. The inability to make things right when the solution is so obvious permeates the Government's mentality and, more important, the Minister of Transport who persists in putting this Bill before the House.

I should like to recapitulate what I said. This Bill has brought Canadians of diverse background and from different regions together as has no other Bill in the history of Parliament.

It is a rare day in Canada. Let me refer to the office vacated by the Prime Minister, that of the President of the Iron Ore Company of Canada. It is a smaller office now because part of the operation was shut down by the previous occupant, the current Prime Minister. Huge chunks of Quebec and Labrador were shut down.

**Mr. Nunziata:** The cameras have been taken out.

**Mr. Tobin:** It is a smaller office, the cameras are gone, and the bathroom has shrunk in size. Nevertheless, the person who now occupies that office agrees with those people who are working their fields at two o'clock in the afternoon in Alberta. They are fighting desperately to save their crops at a time when prices are the lowest they have been in 60 years. They are battling not only international pressure and competition from the EEC and the United States, but they are battling as well a natural plague of grasshoppers.

The grasshopper is no more insidious than this Bill. While the farmer can look after the grasshopper with a squirt of poison—

**Mr. Benjamin:** No, he cannot.

**Mr. Tobin:** At least some of them.

**Mr. Benjamin:** It does not work any longer.

**Mr. Tobin:** I hear the Hon. Member telling me that poison does not work on the grasshopper any longer. In that case, the Bill and the grasshopper have an identical impact upon farmers. No matter how much they squirt at grasshoppers, they keep coming and ultimately destroy the crops; no matter how much farmers keep howling and Hon. Members keep talking, the Government keeps coming forward with this Bill. One way or another, be it the natural plague of grasshoppers or the plague of the Minister of Transport, farmers will get it.

It is a rare day when farmers and the fellow who occupies the IOCC office agree, when the industrialist and forester who lives in the little town of Smithers, a beautiful location on the coastline of northern British Columbia, a little piece of heaven, agree.

• (1650)

The decision yesterday of the International Trading Commission was five to zero. The decision said that the Canadian product is causing injury to American products. The worker wonders whether he will have a job in six months. It is a strange day when the farmer and the forestry workers who are sitting just below the peaks of the beautiful mountains of British Columbia and the fellows sitting in the ivory tower of the corporate boardrooms would all have the same view about this Bill. It is a strange day when we know that the potato farmer in the riding of the Hon. Member for Egmont (Mr. Henderson), who has made a submission before the legislative committee, has the same view as the President of the Montreal Chamber of Commerce about this Bill. Never has the Government succeeded in so uniting Canadians to sing from the same hymn book, Mr. Speaker.

It is a strange day indeed when we know that the poorest fisherman has the same view as the man who sits atop the heap in the corporate boardrooms of this country. Surely to goodness if Canadians are to believe that Members opposite are anything more than surfers—those who surfed in on this Tory wave are those who shall surf out on the Tory wave,