

Pacific, while not alone, is one of the most disgusting companies in this country in terms of the operation of an offshore fleet. That must be corrected.

The majority of Canadians want action on the Government's promises. The only ones who benefit from offshore operations are companies like CP which operate seagoing sweat-shops and forest companies that make large profits by taking advantage of those seagoing sweat-shops. We have to stop that practice so that the benefits will accrue to the people who work in those shipyards and the communities in which they live.

When the House debated the national energy policy under Bill C-48, we dealt with a major part of industrial benefits accruing to Canada. During that stage of development in Canada, many rigs involved in exploration and many of the vessels that supplied those rigs and production units of oil companies operating in Canada were built abroad. The opportunity for Canadian companies to participate in the increasing volume of business gradually declined.

The previous Liberal Government, in its wisdom, decided that it would be cheaper to obtain that equipment offshore because there was not enough in the Canadian market to supply the demand. While an office was developed to determine where Canadian industrial benefits would be derived and to co-ordinate the effort among government Departments to ensure that some of the benefits accrued to Canada, those who looked at it seriously recognized it as the farce it was. That office did not produce the benefits that Canadians should have expected.

The Liberal Government implemented a provision to allow for the acquisition of material and platforms on the basis that Canada did not have the capacity to build them. The reason we lost the capacity is that we permitted the companies to go offshore in the beginning. Those shipyards that had been in the business began to lose it and gradually went under. Then, of course, there was not sufficient business to sustain shipbuilding, so they acquired ships offshore. What happened because of the failure to protect that area was that instead of encouraging and developing growth in the industry to a point where it could stand on its own, harnessing and using the technology of marine platform development, the companies could not afford it and they shrank, and so the whole industry imploded. This was done at the hands of a Liberal Government that was callous and certainly did not care about that particular industry. There were louder voices saying: "It is more important that we profit rather than Canadians as a whole" and they caught that Government's attention.

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I think we have to expose that wrong-headed logic that guided the previous Government. We have to indicate to the people who come before the committee that the present House and the present Government, which made so many promises, will in fact listen to them and will remove the exceptions from this legislation. We must prove that we will expand the

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potential for Canadians in the operation of a deep sea fleet, that there will be an improvement of the shipbuilding industry and the allied industries along with it, that we will indeed pay careful attention to see that Canadians build the offshore exploration and production units to harvest our resources offshore, and we will build the supply ships that service that industry and the infrastructure which supports it.

We are looking at major initiatives in the coming years. At the present time we are going through a depressed price situation with natural gas and petroleum, but that will certainly turn around. We have perhaps found ourselves lucky from the marine industry's point of view that we have some breathing time, that the pace of development offshore has slackened somewhat. However, we know that the pace will pick up again, and when that pace begins to drive forward, the question which must be asked is, will Canadians benefit from the increased activity in the Arctic Ocean and the offshore in the Atlantic? In order to benefit from the increased activity that will take place in the decades to come, the legal infrastructure has to be in place. We need to have a coastal trade legislation that models the Jones Act, that says, you cannot build, you cannot operate coasting ships that have not been built in Canada, and you cannot crew those ships with anyone other than Canadians.

We must move forward now to improve the legislation before us. We must ensure that Canada has a national deep sea fleet. We must also ensure that the offshore development that goes on, exploration, supply and production, not include but be composed of Canadian content, Canadian workers and the Canadian communities which benefit from it.

If the Government is going to live up to its promise to strengthen that sector of industry in Canada, to harness the employment available and the economic opportunity, this Bill is only the first step. The first step with this Bill is to remove the exceptions that exist, the same exceptions that the Liberal Party held to for years and years with such callous contempt for that industry.

I look forward to working in the committee and testing the resolve of government Members in facing the people who work in the shipyard industry and who represent the communities in which those industries are based, the shipowners and shipbuilders who come before the committee.

Let us see the Government's commitment now, three years after the election, to the promises it made. Let us see the Government convince those people that it does in fact have concern, that it will in fact live up to the promises made in the 1984 election campaign. We do not want to hear that those promises will be maintained in some other Parliament. At the present level of honouring promises, the present Government will not exist in another Parliament at least in the form of the Conservative Party of Canada. One of the reasons is that people who live in shipbuilding communities will not be voting for the Conservatives on the basis of their track record to date.