

*Government Orders*

line improvements and lower rates, then we cannot be competitive.

People in the marine transportation industry are saying that if Halifax does not get competitive the port can die. It is almost impossible under the present situation for the port of Halifax to compete with the port of Montreal. Forget the port of Montreal. If was not them—and thank God it is—it would be the American ports. At least the business is staying in Canada. But in a short time it will be the American ports that are going to take all the business with the help of Canadian corporations like Canadian Pacific. They are buying railways and providing facilities that will allow Canadian destined cargo to go through American ports.

It is a very difficult situation. It will not be resolved unless we take the initial steps to correct the situation we now have: get rid of the subsidization that now exists, provide effective and constructive assistance, and get on with the matter of competition. There is in no other answer in international trade.

• (1640)

**Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls):** Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the hon. member for Halifax West and, first of all, I want to respond to the remarks he made about the member from Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte.

The member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte did, as the hon. member just suggested, stand in the House of Commons for six or seven hours and spoke to the House. He dragged out the debate. He spoke all afternoon, all evening, and he was prepared to speak all night. In fact, I am sure he would have spoken for 48 hours or 72 hours if need be.

I want it on the record why the hon. member from Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte stood here in the House of Commons last year and single-handedly filibustered a bill presented by the Government of Canada.

The hon. member who just spoke was absolutely correct. The member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte spoke against clause 4 of Bill C-75. I do not recall exactly what the number was, but the clause had to do with imposing user fees for ice-breaker services in Canada.

I would like to put it on the record, in this way, why the member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte did what he did.

Today I had telephone calls in my office from two people who lived on an island called Long Island on the east coast of Newfoundland. One gentleman had to go to the doctor because he was having what he called radiation sickness. He was being treated for cancer. He was very sick and he felt very bad. He wanted to go from Beaumont, Long Island into Robert's Arm in Newfoundland to see the doctor there in order to be prescribed some pills because he was feeling so bad after he had taken the radiation treatment, which he told me he takes once a month in the Health Sciences Complex in St. John's.

He telephoned me, and his voice was not very good because the radiation had affected it. He said: "Look, I'm stuck here on this island and I cannot get in to see the doctor. The ice is all piled up around the shore and I cannot get in to see a doctor".

Now there are four islands in a row: Little Bay Islands that the hon. member for Labrador knows quite well; Long Island; then there is Change Islands further on; and then there is Fogo Island. Each one of those islands has ferry boats going back and forth, except right now the ice has clogged up everything. It goes out for about 180 miles.

This gentleman was saying: "Look, there is no helicopter service and planes cannot land". This is today, and he wanted to get in to see the doctor.

I checked with the Coast Guard and it said: "Well, we have one ice-breaker assigned to those four islands to try to keep it ice free. But we needed the ice-breaker today because there was a paper boat going into Beaumont and there was an oil boat that needed to go into Lewisporte and we only have one ice-breaker on all of that east coast of Newfoundland".

I phoned up the Coast Guard and I said: "Now, where are your ice-breakers? Don't you provide ice-breaker service anymore to these ferry boats along the coast?" It said: "Well, you know we have got a lot of business accumulated and we have got one ice-breaker on dry dock and we have another one with the propeller that was damaged". I said: "Well, where are all the other ice-breakers?" The Coast Guard said: "Well, there are seven sitting tied up to the dock in Quebec City."