

has this right. Every effort is made to encourage full and frank statements, each witness being afforded the protection of the Canada Evidence Act.

Formal investigations of marine accidents are conducted in four main categories of accidents. The first category is where the casualty is one giving rise to a considerable degree of public concern—that is, where the public confidence in the mode of transportation is at stake. The second category is where the casualty has resulted in some major loss of life, either to passengers or to crew. The third category is where the minister has been unable to determine by the normal investigative process what the casualty was all about. And the fourth and final category is where the casualty may involve lessons or practices which the Minister of Transport may wish to bring to the attention of the maritime industry.

While the Canada Shipping Act empowers the Minister of Transport to appoint any officer of the government of Canada to be a commissioner to hold a formal investigation, the practice has been to appoint a member of the bench in the same way as judges are appointed in the case of aviation accidents. In addition to the commissioner, assessors are selected and appointed by the minister to assist the commissioner in technical matters which may arise in the course of the public inquiry. The conduct of formal investigations is governed by the shipping casualties rules made under the Canada Shipping Act.

The investigation of railway accidents is covered by sections 225 and 226 of the Railway Act. Under the existing requirements, railway accidents must be reported immediately and the Canadian Transport Commission maintains an office that is open 24 hours per day to receive such reports. Following receipt of a report, a district inspector is immediately dispatched to the accident scene. The district inspector's report and any information provided under section 225 of the act are privileged and cannot be released except with an order of the Canadian Transport Commission.

In carrying out accident investigations, the inspector has all the powers of a court. On average, the railways have one accident per day. Thirty per cent of the accidents are caused by motor vehicles colliding with the sides of trains. Of these accidents, 80 per cent take place at protected crossings and 50 per cent take place in daylight. In 1968 an amendment was made to the Railway Act requiring trains to carry reflective markings on their sides but there was no marked improvement in the accident rate. A public inquiry is usually held by the Canadian Transport Commission in the case of major accidents with the objective of finding the cause of the accident and trying to avoid a recurrence. As in the case of the other modes, the purpose of the investigation is not to find fault.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): It being six o'clock, this House stands adjourned until eight o'clock tonight.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Export and Import Permits

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

EXPORT AND IMPORT PERMITS ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING EXPORT OF NATURAL RESOURCE PRODUCTS AND LIMITATION OF IMPORT OF FARM PRODUCTS

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Andras (for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce) that Bill C-4, to amend the Export and Import Permits act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see this bill being debated. I hope it represents a new commodities policy which will govern the export and import of raw products. I want to talk about a commodities policy, and I hope, by bringing in this bill, the government is facing the realities of the present day. We must recognize what Canada is, what our role has been, and what it is our potential to become.

We learned at school how trade in this country was originally developed by the fur trade. Our people trapped animals and sold furs to the markets of Europe, where they were made into articles of valuable clothing. After that we began cutting timber. In Ontario, the white pine and the oak were reserved for Her Majesty's ships, and large rafts of timber were floated down the Ottawa river, to be exported to foreign markets where the wood was manufactured into useful products of greater value. That has been the history of Canada. We have exported from our soil iron ore, coal, nickel, copper, zinc and asbestos. From our forests we took lumber, turned it into pulp and shipped it to foreigners in other countries, there to be processed into higher valued articles of ultimate use. In truth we were labelled a nation of hewers of wood and drawers of water. That has become almost a cliché when describing Canada's role.

In the seventies we are faced with a new concern. New mining machinery, manned by one or two men at the most, is capable of tearing out whole mountains of ore; new shovels can load unit trains which can quickly haul the resources of this country almost untouched by human hand, to foreign lands. Very little employment results for Canadians. The upshot is that we are exporting the lifeblood of the nation without getting any of the real advantages from those raw materials.

● (2010)

What we have seen as a result is a flight from the small towns, from the remote places in the country, to the cities. We have seen unemployment rising to a high of 17 or 18 per cent in Newfoundland, unemployment of almost unbelievable proportions in the northern parts of the prairie provinces among the Metis and the Indians there. Yet from those very areas of Canada we have shipped out by boxcar loads, by pipe line, by unit train and by large trucks the very lifeblood which could make those areas grow and prosper.

We all know that manufacturing industries in this country are no more than 75 per cent efficient on an average compared with equivalent operations in the United States.