

*Canada Shipping Act*

The Council of Forest Industries in British Columbia represents the number one industry in that province. That industry has just been devastated by the 35 per cent tariff imposed on cedar shakes and shingles. That industry is now on bended knee, waiting for the second blow as a result of the unanimous decision yesterday by the U.S. International Trade Commission that there is injury to the American industry as a result of Canadian softwood lumber exports into the United States. That industry is on bended knee, waiting for the sword to slice out its life blood.

That industry said about this Bill and this clause: "We urge the committee to consider the competitive position of exports and the port position. We can recover costs but we warn, we can also be out of business."

That is what the Council of Forest Industries in British Columbia is saying about this Draconian measure.

Earlier, I asked the House to imagine the lobster man on the bill of Cape St. George, sitting on his lobster pots; to imagine the gentleman sitting in the ivory tower of the Iron Ore Company of Canada, to imagine the gentleman overlooking Vancouver Island, representing the forest industry of British Columbia; and to imagine the farmers, all of whom are saying the same thing about this Bill. Yet even the Seafarers' International Union, along with management—employer and employee—are saying the same thing about this Bill. The Government has managed to get nearly every primary producer in Canada, along with management and union, to sing from the same song-book in opposing this Bill. I suggest it is a major accomplishment that everyone opposes the Bill and no one supports it.

The Seafarers' International Union says: "We cannot have full cost recovery if our Canadian marine industry is to survive. Canada and the U.S. are the only marine countries in the world that do not, in some form or another, subsidize the marine industry." It is thought-provoking to know that Canada and the United States do not, in some form or another, subsidize their marine industries. Despite the difficulty in competing with the rest of the world when other countries provide subsidies, the Government will turn around and impose an additional cost on our industry.

The Seafarers' International Union goes on to say: "Of course we will lose jobs. In certain cargoes, the lake companies will just not be able to compete. They will either go out of business or go under foreign flag and the jobs will be lost to Canada. Therefore, we will not have these cargoes. This Bill is very detrimental to our business." These workers are concerned with the movement of freight on the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The Government of Canada set up a five-member subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Transport to initiate a study into the conditions, viability and future of the St. Lawrence Seaway. The Government decided to ask for a subcommittee to study the Seaway because it discovered that the Seaway traffic is decreasing every year and is losing traffic

to the Mississippi River system, which is causing a transfer of jobs from Canada. Furthermore, the international reputation of the St. Lawrence Seaway system has suffered because canal walls have collapsed and ships have been locked in due to ice. Therefore, the Government set up this subcommittee to study the St. Lawrence Seaway.

What is incredible, however, is that at the same time that the Government is setting up a subcommittee to discover why the Seaway is in such difficulty and what can be done to make it more economical, the Government introduces Clause 4 of Bill C-75, which every witness has said will contribute more to the destruction of the vitality of the Seaway than anything else.

This subcommittee had its first meeting in Thunder Bay only yesterday, two weeks since the Bill was introduced. During the course of those hearings it heard from Tony Kaplanis, Thunder Bay co-ordinator of the Western Grain Transportation Agency; Jack Masters of Thunder Bay; Jim Foulds, MPP; Doug Scott of the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Doherty of N.M. Patterson & Sons Ltd.; Jerry Cook of the Thunder Bay Harbour Commission, and others.

The vast majority of witnesses who appeared even yesterday indicated that their overwhelming concern was Clause 4 of Bill C-75. They were telling this subcommittee which the Government set up to determine how to prevent a continued erosion of Seaway traffic, that the first step it should take is to stop Bill C-75 and Clause 4 which is now before Parliament from receiving approval at third reading.

Although such representation was made only yesterday in Thunder Bay, the Government is prepared to approve third reading of this Bill. I must note that the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Nipigon (Mr. Epp) was indeed at the conference as well. I am told that he joined with all those who opposed Clause 4 of Bill C-75. It seems to me that when the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing, sometimes it is better to go back to the drawing-boards to do one's homework. This is clearly an illustration of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing at all. On the one hand, the Minister of Transport spends tens of thousands of taxpayers' dollars to send Members of Parliament around the country to investigate the current condition of the St. Lawrence Seaway. The Government indicates it is concerned, that it wants to restore the economic viability of that Seaway, but, on the other hand, proceeds this afternoon with a Bill which will cut the legs out from underneath the St. Lawrence Seaway, and Hon. Members opposite are prepared to pass it, prepared to sit silently on their hands and let it go through. Seldom has a more confusing Act been seen around this place.

• (1440)

Yesterday, in the Port of Thunder Bay hearings that took place with the subcommittee on the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence Seaway, the Thunder Bay Harbour Commission