

Government Orders

outstanding problems in the Montreal and Quebec harbours while demonstrating at the same time that Parliament is in the process of cleaning up the Department of Transport.

[*English*]

Mr. Belsher: Speak to what it is.

Mr. Lewis: It has no relevance whatsoever.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking about a bill which deals with ports and harbours of Canada. I am sorry if it hurts the hon. members that a unanimous resolution of the city of Hamilton does not seek relevance in the record, but clearly, Mr. Speaker, it is part of the over-all government policy of ports and harbours.

I have every right as a member from the Hamilton area to raise in the House relevant issues, asking the Minister of Transport why he has not broadened the horizons of the port bill, C-82, which is currently before the House. It has much relevance and I believe, Mr. Speaker, that if you examine all of the—

Mr. Lewis: It has no relevance.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Transport does not have the guts to stand up in the House and make the comments that he is making from his seat, I would ask him to stand up and speak to the issue. I want to know why—

Mr. Lewis: The member wants it on the record. The member's debate is completely irrelevant. Therefore, it is on the record.

Ms. Copps: The member continues to shout from his seat that he has no intention of changing the mandate of the Harbour Commission as requested by Hamilton City Council unanimously. He refuses to answer why the Prime Minister has not even bothered to reply to a city council unanimous resolution, and he further refuses to answer to the people of Canada—

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member for Hamilton and appreciate the efforts she is making to refer to her riding of Hamilton East, but I must emphasize the fact that her remarks must be relevant and deal with the Quebec and Montreal harbours. She could also mention the possibility

that this bill may apply to other harbours everywhere in Canada.

Therefore, I seek the co-operation of the Hon. Member for Hamilton East.

Ms. Copps: With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, may I suggest that as we are dealing with harbours, all those speaking in the debate may refer to harbours in general. This bill affects a number of harbours such as those in Montreal and Quebec City, but I see no reason why I should limit my comments to these two harbours. All harbours have problems. My hon. friend of the New Democratic Party referred earlier to the conflict of interest problems involving the Montreal harbour. I suggest that this is not only a problem which affects Montreal, but is at the heart of the National Harbour Board system as demonstrated very clearly here in this House over the past month and about which the municipal council of Hamilton is demanding a reply for the government. Therefore, should the Minister of Transport introduce other bills dealing with harbours, I should be most anxious to participate in their discussion.

• (1810)

I read the agenda but did not see any other instrument aimed at broadening the policy of the Minister of Transport concerning ports. I do not see why I would not be entitled to deal with problems which are not peculiar to the port of Hamilton but which relate as well to potential conflicts of interest in Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto and in a number of other sectors where a commission is established to extend certain privileges to certain individuals who can normally or generally be considered to be friends of the government. I would therefore suggest that evidence of relevancy is there for anyone to see.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that following the resolution adopted by the Hamilton municipal council I wrote a letter dated October 19 in which I asked for a response from the Prime Minister at the earliest time.

[*English*]

I asked for a follow-up to the unanimous resolution of the Hamilton city council. I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister on October 19 in which I asked him for a very speedy answer to the legitimate concerns of the people of Hamilton as they concern the disposition of lands, and