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Canadian National and other Crown agencies, forcing higher costs on a particular area of the country without regard to the economic difficulties that can cause.

There is no field of activity in transportation where you see the disastrous effect of Government policies and programs more than in the marine transportation industry. On the face of it, there have been very substantial efforts made by the Government over the past number of years to deal with problems in the marine transportation sector, particularly the switch to Ports Canada, from the National Harbours Board. We have seen other activities related to the National Harbours Board and Ports Canada. Again we have had that misdirection and failure to carry out the national purpose. The move, which we in this Party strongly supported, to have independent national ports across Canada has been weakened in its very inception. Let me explain what transpired leading up to the switch from the National Harbours Board to the Ports Canada setup.

We are not sure even today that this is not just a change in name with the same old personalities remaining in place. I have brought it to the attention of the House on other occasions that the Government started with a debt write-off program. It came forward with \$475 million for the write-off of debts. Here is how it was handled. The Port of Montreal wrote off \$231 million, almost half the total, in debts. The Port of Halifax, a very important player in the international marine transport deal, wrote off \$30 million in debts. This was just prior to the big changeover from the National Harbours Board to the Ports Canada system; \$231 million versus \$30 million.

We now have Ports Canada. We have independent ports in Montreal, Halifax and in other parts of Canada. Some of those independent ports are a little more independent than others because they do not have the burden of a \$230 million debt, yet they have all the facilities that were paid for by that expenditure. The Government told Montreal it had better pile in a lot of facilities, even facilities it did not need and build up debts because it would write them off. It said it would be an independent port in a year or two with no debts, but all kinds of facilities. Poor little second cousins like the Port of Halifax have to go out and build their container piers, charge them up to their own operations and pay for them. That is exactly what is happening today.

In its great generosity, Ports Canada approved the extension of the Fairview Container Pier, to the extent of \$25 million—\$30 million. Had we had that extension two years ago when we knew it was necessary, we would have received the debt write-off to go with it. We would not have to pay all that money.

There is another important part of marine transportation which is often neglected, and that is shipbuilding. I say you cannot separate the operative transportation side of the marine industry from the shipbuilding side. That is the big mistake we have made in Canada. It has been said that marine transportation is simply ships coming and going. That is wrong. We have very substantial shipbuilding facilities in Canada. It is a large industry in which we can create 15,000 to 28,000 jobs over-

night by simply building our own ships for our own transportation needs. That has been totally neglected, not only by the Ministry of Transport and the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, which established policies through which ships are permitted to enter into national trade, but by all other aspects of Government. For example, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, with the co-operation of these other Departments I have mentioned, could easily exclude non-Canadian ships from activity in our offshore waters. This alone would create massive activity for Canadian shipyards and would create many thousands of jobs.

• (1520)

We are concerned with the lack of any cohesive policy in marine transportation to provide and ensure activity and jobs on the transport side, on the shipbuilding side and on the side of all of the activities related to shipbuilding and marine transport. What do we get, Mr. Speaker? We get the same old patronage and the same old desire to feed at the public trough. What does the new Minister of Transport do? He looks at the new Ports Canada and the other emanations of Ports Canada and local port corporations and sees another opportunity for patronage.

How do you like this, Mr. Speaker? Since 1936, the Auditor General has checked the books of the National Harbours Board. Canada Ports Corporation more than anything else needs a new auditor. Where can we find an auditor to check the books of a corporation that deals with marine matters? We find him in Winnipeg. That is the logical place to find a person who really knows the marine scene. Winnipeg, Manitoba, happens to be the home city of the Minister of Transport. I wonder if there is any connection. So Walter Dubowec—

Mr. Nowlan: He is the official agent of the Liberal Party in Manitoba.

Mr. Crosby: My colleagues have told me that Walter Dubowec, the man who has been appointed auditor for Ports Canada, is the official agent of the Liberal Party. However, as the official agent of the Liberal Party of Manitoba he has very little to do with this situation, so he should not have any problem taking over these duties. I have a problem with regard to getting rid of the Auditor General.

Mr. Ouellet: What is the name of the firm?

Mr. Crosby: Never mind the name of the firm. We got rid of the Auditor General because we are trying to set up Ports Canada, not to run the ports of Canada, not to provide a service, but to be an outlet for more Liberal patronage. That is how shameless the Minister of Transport is. He begins to bring patronage into the one area in which we must have total independence. He attacks that area and appoints a Liberal partisan as Auditor General. How can we complain about any other appointment after that? They just flow like water over Niagara Falls. We are not going to complain about the make up of the Board of Directors of Ports Canada. We are not going to complain when the Minister puts Otto Lang on the