

Canada Shipping Act

unemployed; in Manicouagan, 93 per cent of the workers are unemployed; in Halifax, 25 per cent of the workers are unemployed; in Saint John, 35 per cent of the workers are unemployed; in Quebec City, 31 per cent of the workers are unemployed; and in Sorel, 26 per cent of the workers are unemployed. That is the situation as it stands, which points out how serious it is for so many of the communities from Thunder Bay right through to the eastern part of Quebec.

It seems to us that what the Government is proposing is, in fact, contrary to the promises made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). In July of 1984 the present Prime Minister, in the Prince Albert declaration, made a number of commitments as to what a Progressive Conservative Government would do in respect of this type of question. I would like to put on the record some of the words which the Prime Minister said when he was the Leader of the Opposition. He said:

A Progressive Conservative government will immediately examine ways and means to provide improved services and equitable rates in consultation with grain producers who are discriminated against geographically.

Grain companies, both private and co-operative, have expressed their opposition to what is proposed in the Bill which is before us. The former Leader of the Opposition also said:

The federal government and the railways must continue to provide a special low rate . . . to assist producers competing with subsidized grain export nations.

What has happened to that commitment? We know, for example—and I mention it now because my allotted time may expire before I come to the point where I wish to deal with this matter separately—that in the United States, through the Corps of Army Engineers, the American Government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars—indeed, billions of dollars—in making the Mississippi River and the Houston Canal capable of moving grain and other products from Minneapolis right down to the Gulf of Mexico. It did that virtually no user charges at all.

Thus, if we increase the costs of shipping on the St. Lawrence Seaway, more and more grain from the mid-western United States which previously moved through Duluth and the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Atlantic Ocean will obviously move down the Mississippi River because it is so highly subsidized. Indeed, I remind Hon. Members that when we were discussing this matter at the time when the Liberal Government brought in its legislation to wipe out the special transportation subsidies provided for the shipment of grain through the Crow Rate agreement, we warned that not only would the American grain move increasingly down the Mississippi but that with deregulation we will see a time in the not too distant future when Canadian grain will be shipped to Minneapolis and then down the Mississippi with its highly subsidized rates.

● (1250)

The producers were promised by the Prime Minister in the Prince Albert declaration that there would be an efficient, cost effective and reliable grain transportation system. But if we are going to have increasing users' fees apply to the shipments

on the St. Lawrence Seaway, there will not be a cost effective transportation system on the St. Lawrence for western grain.

In August of 1984 the Prime Minister addressed the Empire and Canadian Clubs in Toronto in which he said, and I quote:

A Progressive Conservative Government will freeze existing freight rates paid by producers from any further increase pending the results of the legislation's review mechanism into producers' ability to pay.

What has happened to that promise, Mr. Speaker? If the cost of shipping through the St. Lawrence Seaway is raised dramatically as, obviously, it will be, and since the price we ask for Canadian grain must be competitive with the price charged by other producers, those increased costs will again be passed on to the producers of grain. It seems obvious to us that in this legislation the Government has forgotten or intends to ignore the promise made by the Prime Minister.

It is the intention of our Party to oppose this Bill and to vote against it. We would urge the Government to consider cancelling all tolls or fee increases initiated or planned during the 1985-86 fiscal year, and to cancel the transference of \$30 million from the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority to the Consolidated Revenue Fund in the 1986-87 fiscal year. That is what we propose for the immediate presence.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Are there questions or comments? Resuming debate.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, since it is almost the time at which we adjourn for lunch, would the House agree that we call it one o'clock?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it so agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being one o'clock, I shall now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 12.54 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Keith Penner (Cochrane-Superior): Mr. Speaker, while nowhere in Bill C-75, which we are debating today, does not specifically say, it nevertheless signals, as I think Members who read it carefully will agree, that there will be a growing volume of oil tanker shipping on a year-round basis in Arctic waters. Of course that is built on a policy statement that was made in the House on September 10 by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) who said, as reported on page 6463 of *Hansard*, the following:

The policy of the Government is also to encourage the development of the navigation in Canadian Arctic waters. Our goal is to make the Northwest Passage a reality for Canadians and foreign shipping as a Canadian waterway.

That is the policy statement and it is quite true that the Minister went on to talk about concern for the preservation of