

Canadians and are sold by Canadians as processed fish; that the oil and petrochemical resources now discovered all come through Canadian hands. This will not happen because of this Bill, and that disappoints me. Therefore, again I ask the Minister and the Government why do they not come clean? Why do they not really tell us how far they will go to assist perhaps one of the most depressed parts of our country, the part of our country where unemployment is by far the highest? The only way we are ever going to reduce the human misery, the tragedy, the unemployment and poverty upon poverty which exists in parts of Atlantic Canada, particularly, is by enabling the people there to have resources which they can exploit and so earn a living and have a decent standard of existence. We could do that, but this Bill does not do it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Are there any questions on the remarks of the Hon. Member?

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important piece of legislation and we note there are 17 minutes left in which to get it through second reading, through committee stage and finish it all this afternoon. I just wonder whether, as spokesperson for the Conservative Party on this Bill, the previous speaker could stand up and enlighten this House as to whether his Party intends to let this particular Bill go through all stages today, or whether it is going to sandbag it?

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I could say that that is not a permitted question under the rules, but I will not. I believe it is only fair that the Hon. Members of the New Democratic Party, so much in bed with the Liberal Party these days, should have an answer to that question.

Mr. Althouse: Look at our voting record.

Mr. Blenkarn: Yes, we can look at that Party's voting record and we could look at its arrangements today. I am told that there are Hon. Members of the New Democratic Party looking for Liberal nominations. They get along with the Liberals famously. Obviously, the Hon. Member is prepared to give away this legislation. He wants to have another notch in his record, showing that once again he has come to heel to the Liberal Party. Are we going to do what the Hon. Member asks? Well, that is not up to me, Sir. There are other Hon. Members of this House of Commons who want to make contributions. We have already passed three pieces of legislation this afternoon.

Mr. Althouse: Is that enough?

Mr. Blenkarn: If this legislation did something for Canadians we could probably go through it quickly. However, the Minister and the Government do not even answer questions on the matter. I am surprised that the Hon. Member would even ask such a question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Are there any other questions or comments? Debate.

Customs and Excise

Mr. Bob Corbett (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to finally have the opportunity to speak on Bill C-16, an Act to apply the customs and excise jurisdiction of Canada to the continental shelf of Canada and to amend certain Acts in relation thereto or in consequence thereof.

This Bill is long overdue, Mr. Speaker, or legislation like it. Unfortunately, as pointed out by the previous speaker, we are extremely disappointed that for some reason or other this Government has decided that it is going to single out people in the business of building fishing vessels of over 100 feet for particular persecution. This Government has determined that it is going to single out particularly those men and women who are normally employed in that section of the shipbuilding industry for isolation and persecution as well. We believe it is extremely unfair, Mr. Speaker, and we plead with the Government to reconsider its seemingly intransigent position on this matter and, indeed, give the issue some very deep consideration. We plead with the Government to show some compassion for those people to whom a livelihood is just as important as it is for those people who might be involved in the construction of new vessels used in exploration work, new passenger vessels, and virtually all other shipping material for use in Canada within the 200-mile limit.

The ways and means motion which was presented to this House last June 29 was indeed one which was heralded with a great deal of enthusiasm by our Party, as it was by the New Democratic Party. We had pressured the Government before that time to get on with the long awaited legislation which it had been talking about approving and bringing forth to this House for some number of months—indeed probably in the vicinity of two years, perhaps two and a half years. Until last June 29 we and the industry had not seen anything of it. Of course, in the meantime we have been pressing the Government to introduce the legislation so we could peruse it and have the opportunity of assessing its impact on the shipbuilding industry in this country.

I personally welcome a good number of the areas with which the Bill deals. I believe it is indeed good news for the shipping industry that this Government finally has become aware of the plight it has been experiencing over the last number of years. One of the problems we have with this legislation at this late date is that the shipbuilding industry has plummeted to such depths of despair that a good many of the qualified workmen, who for years found work in that particular sector, have now left the area and have taken up other means of making a living. For instance, in 1982, there were over 9,000 people in this nation employed in the shipbuilding industry and, indeed, this year that work force has dropped to less than 2,000 men. The ship yard in Saint John, New Brunswick, one of the finest facilities you will find anywhere in the world, let alone in Canada, steadily employed upwards of 1,500 to 2,000 people. In 1978 it employed 2,089 people. In 1981 that number had dropped to 1,627, and, indeed, in January of this past year, the work force at the Saint John yard had dropped to a shameful low of 40 men. I doubt today if there are 40 men still working at that shipyard. I realize that the shipyard at Saint John has