

*Government Orders*

We have unanimously agreed here today that we are not going to be voting on Bill C-35. We are going to suspend later this day when there are no more who are speaking and wait for a ruling from the Chair. But let us not kid ourselves. The parliamentary secretary knows and I know that this particular statute, Bill C-35, affects more than 90 federal statutes of the Government of Canada. I believe each is affected in a minor way but collectively in a very substantive way. It affects the activities of the Government of Canada on how it interfaces with its own agencies as well as the agencies of the government in the various provincial capitals across this country. I will name a few beginning with Public Works. Every Canadian will know and will understand that the Government of Canada does have lands in each and every province and territory of this country.

• (1440)

There are amendments to various federal statutes contained in the bill which would affect both directly and indirectly that particular federal department.

The Canadian Railways Act, the shipping conferences exemptions, railway safety, public harbours and ports, national transportation, Canada Ports Corporation, motor vehicle transport, Department of Agriculture, farm debt review, Canadian Dairy Commission, Prairie Grains Advance Payments, narcotics control, the Atlantic Opportunities Agency, access to information, Civil Service Commission, the Financial Administration Act of the Government of Canada allow federal ministers, under clause 99, to give direction to a Crown corporation in his or her particular jurisdiction.

There are a number of points that I would like to make with regard to the bill. If I may, I would like to point out a few of them so that the members of the House will understand my concern. I think I would be less than candid if I said: "Well, you know, these will bring down the government and will add further havoc to the Canadian economy." That is not what I am suggesting. What I am suggesting is that procedurally there are a number of concerns that I think have to be raised both in terms of the substance and the consequential effects.

I would like to speak on the Canada Ports Corporation Act. This particular bill sets out before us what is now

going to take place. Canada Ports Corporation will have the administration, management and control of all such property and works within the boundaries of that harbour or within 20 kilometres thereof. That is certainly a substantive change from what it was previously, because the administration, management and control of the harbours was for the harbours. They are now extending that control by some 20 kilometres.

The old act read: "The administration of all such property and works within the limits of that harbour as are administered by the corporation shall be deemed to have been transferred to the local Ports Corporation." Not only are we going to see that control given away as such, but we have extended it by 20 kilometres. I would think, as someone who has practised law, that there are probably some very cogent reasons as to why that was being done but again it is certainly something of note and some concern to those of us who sit in the opposition.

The transfer to the corporation or a local port corporation may in fact be the appropriate thing to do in certain circumstances, but one has to question whether or not the over-all principle ought to be applied on each and every occasion. We raise that as a matter of concern for members of this House who may have a certain set of circumstances where the local port authority would be the most appropriate, but now this act deems that that will happen to all the various ports that are administered by Canada Ports Corporation.

Another point which I believe is deserving of mention and concern is with regard to page 13, amendments to section 37, state that "where the minister receives a notice of the proposed export of a toxic substance", the minister must publish the name or specifications of the toxic substance. Previously, the minister concerned with this particular statute, and I believe it was the Minister of the Environment, under section 37 of the Canada Environmental Protection Act the minister received a notice of the proposed export or import of a toxic substance or hazardous waste. That has now been changed and I suggest it is a substantive change. The new clause reads:

Where the Minister receives a notice of the proposed export of a toxic substance under this section 42—