

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### MAINTENANCE OF PORTS OPERATIONS ACT, 1986

#### MEASURE TO ENACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Cadieux that Bill C-24, an Act to provide for the maintenance of ports operations, be read the second time and, by unanimous consent, referred to Committee of the Whole.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) has seven minutes remaining in his speech, followed by 10 minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with Bill C-24, an Act to provide for the maintenance of ports operations. Earlier I mentioned that the Government seems to be governing from crisis to crisis. The announcement this afternoon that the microfiches have finally been found after a three-hour or four-hour delay indicates that it governs from crisis to crisis. Perhaps that is why the Goldfarb poll published in early September indicated that two-thirds of the people who responded felt that the Government governed from crisis to crisis.

I should like to return to the Bill before us. I mentioned that we wanted to see the appointment of the Industrial Inquiry Commission so that it can deal not only with the question of containers but with the operation of the port itself. The British Columbia Maritime Employers Association is holding out the prospect of dozens or perhaps hundreds of jobs, whereas the employees and their union are fearing the loss of some 300 jobs. We want to see the terms of reference of the commission as well as a provision in the Act for a review by the Industrial Inquiry Commission of job security, the development of the port, rail facilities, and improvement of the port's competitive position. If those physical structures are not in place, obviously the estimate of the employers association indicating that an additional 80,000 containers per year could be handled will not come about. Naturally the employees union is very concerned about the situation.

I hope the industrial commission will comment on the lack of action by Canadian Pacific and Canadian National in terms of their responsibilities under the Act governing western rail transportation and their commitments to improve and enhance their facilities. I understand that those commitments have not been kept.

I should like to turn to subclause 13(2) which deals with punishment for offences. They seem to vary from \$500 to \$100,000 and include the loss of the privilege of serving in a union capacity. Surely officers in the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association should be subject to the same sanctions. If they break the law and are convicted under the Act, they should be subject to the same sanctions as union officials or executives.

I think subclause 13(2) should read as follows:

### *Maintenance of Ports Operations Act, 1986*

No officer or representative of a union or of British Columbia Maritime Employers Association who is convicted of an offence under this Act that was committed while the officer or representative was acting in that capacity shall be employed in any capacity by, or act as an officer or representative of, the union or the association at any time during the five years immediately after the date of the conviction.

Without that provision, we would come down in a very uneven manner on the side of the employers association.

This is not a strike; this is a lock-out. The action is being taken by the employers association to block the shipment of grain and other commodities from a British Columbia port. The port desperately needs every ounce of economic activity it can get, now that Expo 86 is over and the realities of the lack of that activity are so apparent in British Columbia.

We want to see the piece of legislation go forward. We have agreed to the House order to conclude consideration of the legislation tomorrow. We would like to see a number of things introduced at committee stage, but for now we want to see the legislation go forward.

**Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-24 with a great deal of feeling as the Hon. Member for Vancouver East wherein the port is located. We are very proud of our port. It is important to Canada. I also speak on behalf of my constituents who are both directly and indirectly affected by the legislation. By far the greatest source of employment in my riding is in port related industries and shipping.

We know that the Port of Vancouver is a major link for Canada to the Pacific Rim. Every day we see ships at that port carrying bulk goods such as grain, potash, lumber, and coal. Last year the Port of Vancouver handled over 59 million tonnes of bulk cargo, resulting in many jobs for workers in Vancouver.

In addition to bulk goods, in recent years there has been a tremendous increase in container goods—smaller goods and general merchandise which go from Canada to the Far East and Pacific Rim countries and those which come in from such countries. There has been a great increase in container traffic, but not nearly as much as there has been in ports to the south of Vancouver. Only 12.6 per cent of container traffic through the Port of Vancouver is affected by the controversial container clause. I will return to that point later.

We know that the Port of Vancouver is crucial to Canada's economy, as it is to our future trade and our future economy. It is essential not only to people on the West Coast and western farmers. It is also essential to the total nation. It is very important that we keep the port open. It is very important that we have a competitive port. It must be able to handle our goods efficiently and increase our trade with the use of modern technology.

• (1720)

I would like Members of the House and Canadians to know, particularly western farmers, that the problems in the Port of Vancouver go far beyond a container clause which affects only