

Ms. Coppes: Thanks to the Conservatives.

Mr. Shields: That only underlines exactly what I said, Mr. Speaker. The Hon. Member opens her mouth and it flies out. The Conservatives did not set the price of oil in Saudi Arabia. We did not set the world price, and she knows it. It was the Conservatives who brought in the Western Accord after the National Energy Program was imposed on western Canada. It was the Conservatives who brought interest rates down from 18 per cent to 20 per cent to the present levels. That is what we did.

As well, the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain and his seconder could have brought in a motion concerning farm families in my riding, Saskatchewan or Manitoba. These people have worked all their lives on the family farm and they are now on the verge of losing those farms because of low commodity prices. They could have used this day to some advantage to all Canadians. Yet what do they do? They bring in a silly item which they know full well is being treated exactly the same as any other item, whether it be a labour dispute or whatever. In this case there is a grievance procedure and the issue will be aired completely. Yet the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain wants to stand up in the hope of getting the attention on TV at night so that people can say, my, "Isn't the NDP working hard for the common man". They can look at the Hon. Member for Hamilton East and say, "Oh, there is that good old girl who ran the Rat Pack and jumped over tables and chairs. Boy, she is sure fighting for the common person".

Mr. Rossi: That is one thing you cannot do, Jack. You are too old.

Mr. Shields: I am telling you that I am ashamed that we are wasting time in the House of Commons when I know oil companies in my area are going broke. One company alone is laying off 200 drillers.

Mr. Angus: Thanks to you, Jack.

Mr. Shields: You want to hear some of it? I will give you some it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind Members of the rule of relevance. The Hon. Member for Athabasca may, rightly or wrongly, say that another topic could have been discussed. However, we have an Opposition Day and the Opposition chose a motion which was judged proper and in order by the Chair. I ask Hon. Members to speak to the motion.

Mr. Shields: Mr. Speaker, I thought I was, but I will certainly take your advice. I want to speak on the motion.

Instead of using a silly and time wasting motion, why was something not put forward which would address the problems facing Bow Valley Industries, for example? I think that would be very appropriate. We could talk about the loss of jobs in

Supply

western Canada. I wonder if anyone has taken the trouble to read that motion.

• (1640)

Mr. Rodriguez: Did you read it?

Mr. Shields: I sure have. That Member should stand in his place, Mr. Speaker, and speak if he feels that he wants to make a contribution.

Listen to the motion. It reads:

That this House believes that the recent action by Air Canada, in suspending flight attendant Toni Corrado for 30 days as the result of her reply to questions from a Progressive Conservative convention delegate during a flight from Vancouver to Montreal, was improper and denies the principle of free speech as guaranteed in Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

That is taking it totally. The Member for Hamilton Mountain and the Member for Hamilton East are saying that is all that happened. I do not know what happened. I will tell you this, we will all know when the grievance process goes through, which is all done in secret. The unions have even agreed that they are not going to discuss their deliberations. Air Canada has agreed that they are not going to discuss it, but it will be announced. A grievance procedure is in place, yet those Members want a Government to jump in with both feet before this process takes place. It is silly, it is absolutely silly.

I find that the opposition motion today is a deliberate attempt, in my view, by the two opposition spokesmen, to smear the Minister of Transport, his reputation and his ability as a Minister. This is done after, and I repeat this again, after the Member for Hamilton Mountain stood in his place and apologized most profusely and said that, of course, this was not his intent. It is clearly their intent to try to discredit the Minister and his Department.

Mr. Rodriguez: You don't accept his word?

Mr. Shields: The NDP member says we don't accept his word. Well, he says I don't accept the word of the Member for Hamilton Mountain. I say his actions speak louder than words. He stood in this House and apologized, and then today he attacks the Minister and his Department. What are we to think?

We could have spent this whole day discussing some of the issues that are facing this country, such as the fish in Cape Breton and free trade. There are a number of issues that we could have been discussing. Anything I heard today was totally destructive. Anything I heard today from the Hon. Members over there was totally out of line in this House.

We are not discussing freedom of speech.

Mr. Rodriguez: You sure are.

Mr. Shields: The Members are trying to make the point that that is really what the issue is.

Mr. Rodriguez: That's right. What is the issue?