

comment with respect to the view of the NDP on free ports and the question of whether there is any good reason why a port operating in Washington State should be more price-competitive than the Port of Vancouver, part of which is encompassed in the Hon. Member's riding. I would expect that she would be somewhat knowledgeable with respect to the operations of the Port of Vancouver since part of it is encompassed within her riding.

Ms. Mitchell: Of course I am.

Mr. Siddon: I understand that the amendment before the House proposes to suspend the debate on this measure for six months. If that were to take place, then what will that do for the status of the Port of Vancouver in the eyes of offshore shippers?

I am also advised by way of the announcement dealing with the new port in Bellingham that, in fact, it is the frustration with the delays at the Port of Vancouver, as well as the fact of higher operating costs, which has encouraged the location of a port in the United States so close to our city and so close to the major and important Port of Vancouver.

Could the Hon. Member answer these questions? Is the NDP in favour of free ports? Why is it cheaper to bring products into Canada through a port in Washington State than through our own Port of Vancouver, part of which is in the Hon. Member's riding?

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, as I said before, I do not have any profound specialization in this area. I do know that the Port of Vancouver has been struggling and that there are many, many reasons for those struggles. One of the reasons—and I wish my colleague from the Prairies were here to expound on it—is that there is sometimes a difficulty in transferring grains to ships. We have seen ships paying demurrage costs in the port. When I checked into the matter I found many complex reasons why this has taken place, not the least of which is the complex type of specialized grains which we have which have to go into different containers for transportation.

I mentioned earlier an administrative delay in some circumstances in the Port of Vancouver. I mentioned the method of contracting out leases which I understand is the new method in which this Government has had a hand.

There is also the matter of labour costs. There is no question about that. If the Minister is saying that we should not have trade unions—

Mr. Siddon: I did not say that.

Ms. Mitchell: —and that workers on the waterfront should not have decent wages, then let us hear him say that since that is what he is implying.

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Canada Shipping Act

Ms. Mitchell: I do not know a great deal about free ports, as I have already mentioned. This is a proposal about which I heard just last week. I think that would be a major concern.

Mr. Siddon: Would you support it?

Ms. Mitchell: We are for fair trade and not free trade, as the Conservatives are. We are for fair ports and efficiently run, decentralized Canadian ports with a Canadian board supplying a great many Canadian jobs, especially in Vancouver East.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member spoke about her concern with respect to the movement of dangerous goods. If I understood her correctly, she left the House with the impression that there was nothing of substance in the Bill with respect to the movement of dangerous goods. I would ask the Hon. Member to examine the Bill again and look at Clauses 44 and 52. In looking at those clauses she will find that there are amendments contained therein which will in fact provide for more effective regulation of the movement of dangerous goods by sea. This is consistent with the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act in the area of packaged commodities. Bulk cargoes will continue to be regulated under the Canada Shipping Act. I suggest that if the Hon. Member were to look again at the Bill she would find that there are some fairly effective amendments in it which I believe will achieve the purposes to which she has alluded.

I believe I heard the Hon. Member say that there was insufficient consultation with respect to this measure. If there ever was a Bill which involved long, drawn-out efforts to consult with all players, then this is clearly one of them. The trade unions were consulted, as were the ship owners, ship builders and ship repairers, the oil industry and the fishing industry. Because of the Bill's importance, its widespread implications and the fact that there are some 12 protocols and conventions to which Canada could not become a party, this Bill necessitated that type of dialogue. I can assure the Hon. Member that type of dialogue did take place.

Ms. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, because I do not think the Minister was in the House when I mentioned this fact, I would like to point out to him that someone in my office called a number of groups in the Vancouver area, and I listed them. He will be able to read that in *Hansard* tomorrow. Not one of these groups knew about the Bill which is being debated today. I would be very happy to see the safety sections reviewed by some of these groups. I congratulate the Minister for taking up those measures. What I was saying is that we feel there could be more specifics in the Bill in other areas.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have a chance to speak on Bill C-75 because there is a great deal happening at the present time with shipping in the St. Lawrence Seaway system. The motion with respect to giving a six month hoist to the Bill concerns Clause 4 which would amend Section 3.1(1) of the Act. It would give the Government the power to charge user fees for the provision of navigational aids, dredging, vessel traffic services, ice-breaking