

EVIDENCE

MAY 26, 1954.

3.30 p.m.

The CLERK: Gentlemen, there is a quorum, Mr. McCulloch, and the vice-chairman, Mr. Cavers, are unavoidably absent today, and I would ask you to elect a chairman pro tem.

Mr. LANGLOIS (*Gaspé*): May I move, seconded by Mr. Gourd (*Chapleau*), that Mr. Byrne be appointed chairman pro tem?

The CLERK: Are there any other nominations? It has been moved and seconded that Mr. Byrne be acting chairman. Those in favour? Opposed, if any?

The motion is carried unanimously.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Thank you, gentlemen, for honouring me on this occasion. I am certainly humbled in attempting to replace the venerable member for Pictou and I ask your indulgence on this my first attempt to act as chairman.

We have a quorum, and I will now declare the meeting of this committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines open, and we will consider Bill 421, an Act to amend the National Harbours Board Act. We should have a general discussion and I would like to ask the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transport for a short statement.

Mr. LANGLOIS (*Gaspé*): Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, may I be first permitted to introduce to you the representatives of the National Harbours Board who are in attendance here this afternoon. On my right we have the chairman, Mr. R. K. Smith, the vice-chairman Brigadier Maurice Archer and Mr. J. F. Finlay, counsel for the board. These gentlemen are here at your disposal to supply any information or explanations that you may wish to have in connection with the proposed bill which is presently before you for study. I do not wish to delay the proceedings of the committee by making a lengthy statement, considering the fact that I have already made a series of comprehensive remarks in the House when the bill came up for second reading the other day. I wish, however, to repeat that a good many of the proposed amendments are put forward as a result of the experience acquired through some 18 years of operation of the National Harbours Board; that is, since its inception in 1936. I must also remind you, gentlemen, that the National Harbours Board Act has never been amended since 1936 with the exception of one slight amendment in 1938 which merely granted the board the power to sue and be sued in its own name in tort. Many of the proposed amendments are what we might call routine amendments. These are amendments for the purpose of clarification or placing in a more logical place within the Act some of the existing sections of the Act.

A few days ago representations were received from the Shipping Federation of Canada regarding the proposed legislation and I am informed that a request has been made to the secretary of this committee for the Shipping Federation of Canada to appear before you, gentlemen, and express their views on certain features of the proposed bill. We have here today counsel for the Shipping Federation of Canada, Mr. Brisset of the firm of Beaugard, Brisset and Reycoft. This gentleman is here, but he can be heard only if the committee so wishes. If I may make a suggestion in this respect, leaving