

Canada Shipping Act

Edward Island. They are a representative group of producers. In their brief they in no way agree to Bill C-75, specifically Clause 4.

Mr. Forrestall: But they do not disagree with the principle of recovery of some charges. Respond to that.

Mr. Henderson: I look at another group, Women in Support of Agriculture. I will put this on the record so the Parliamentary Secretary will know the correspondence his Minister is getting. I am sure his Minister does not tell him what is going on. This is a copy of a letter to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski). It says:

Re: BILL C-75 CLAUSE 4

Dear Sir: Women in Support of Agriculture express our gravest concern that you may be charging user fees on dredging, vessel traffic services, icebreaking services and escorting services.

This added cost would be very detrimental to our primary industries here on Prince Edward Island.

During the fall and winter months, many of our seed potatoes are moved by boat to offshore markets. We have worked for years to establish our seed markets and with the competitiveness of the potato industry and the low prices we have been receiving for our product, our farmers cannot afford this added cost.

We therefore urge you to delete Clause 4 from Bill C-75.

Yours truly,
Wanda MacMurdo
Provincial President
Women in Support of
Agriculture

Carbon copies of that letter went to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan), the Hon. Member for Malpeque (Mr. Gass) and the Hon. Member for Cardigan (Mr. Binns). If they had been listening to and expressing the concerns of Prince Edward Islanders the Conservatives would not have fared quite so badly in the provincial election. The Parliamentary Secretary must look at some of this. I do not care how many groups came forward and said they support something in principle. I can tell you that the people hurt by this legislation, the ordinary primary producer, is not supporting it in principle or in any other way.

Mr. Forrestall: Do you want free transportation in Canada? Is that what you are in favour of? No charges at all?

Mr. Henderson: The Parliamentary Secretary and his Minister and Government will find that out. The Parliamentary Secretary will not only have a hard time getting his nomination, as he did the last time in his own riding, he will have a hard time getting elected. When I point the finger at him, he is gone.

Mr. Forrestall: I am what?

Mr. Skelly: That is harsh talk.

Mr. Forrestall: Are you opposed to any cost recovery?

Mr. Henderson: The Parliamentary Secretary wants to go back home now and again, and come over to Prince Edward Island, up through New Brunswick and in the areas hurting—

Mr. Forrestall: I probably spend as much time in Prince Edward Island as you do.

Mr. Henderson: He has been sitting around the corridors of Ottawa for far too long. He is in this sort of greenhouse environment where everything is fine. When he gets out and actually hears what people are saying, then I think he will take a different view. I expect that after this little talk I have been able to give for the benefit of the Parliamentary Secretary, he will get up and support those of us in the Opposition. I know he has a heart behind that sort of—

Mr. Tobin: Cold facade.

Mr. Henderson: Yes, cold facade. He does have a heart. He would not try to do that to the good people of Prince Edward Island. He will talk to the President of the Treasury Board and his other colleagues who have influence in the Government and suggest that this clause should be deleted because it will affect them when they go back to the polls in the next election. He will warn them that not only will he not return, the Government will not be re-elected.

● (1610)

In conclusion, anyone who is involved in the primary industries in Atlantic Canada does not support Clause 4 in Bill C-75. I hope the Government listens to what the Opposition and other people are saying. While we on this side agree with much of Bill C-75, we certainly do not support Clause 4. I hope those Members on the Government side will come to their senses, delete that clause, and allow the rest of the Bill to proceed as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to participate in this debate. At the outset, let me make it perfectly clear that we believe the Parliamentary Secretary and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) are not proposing these measures of their own free will. Both those individuals are very well versed in the transportation needs of this country, and we believe that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the top level of the Cabinet are forcing them to bring in this legislation. They are being told that they must grind this money out of Canadians.

We direct our criticism at the Government as a whole, on the basis of principle. We are opposed to the Government's principle on cost recovery. The people who live and work on the coast of British Columbia live in one of the most dangerous and expensive environments in this country.

Other Canadians benefit from the Trans-Canada Highway, for which there are no tolls. Those people who live in Bella Bella, Bella Coola and the northern ends and the west coast of Vancouver Island paid for that highway out of their tax dollars. While they shared that cost with other Canadians, they are being asked to pick up the tab for their version of the Trans-Canada Highway, the safety and search and rescue aspect at sea. They are being asked to foot the bill for marine aids to navigation and for the harbours that are really the