

Supply—Justice

refused, perhaps on these grounds of a mistaken assessment of the information available. We just do not stop at the official exchange of statistics or written reports; we talk these things over as well.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I should on recollection, in fairness, make it clear that the official I was talking to was not by any means a senior official. I thought he was most unsuited to assess information of this sort.

Mr. Pickersgill: The government or someone in the government did manage to get a situation cleared up, if I remember rightly, where because of the peculiar name of the hon. gentleman's party, the Progressive Conservative party, there was some feeling in the United States that he was a dubious character.

Mr. Fulton: They are not as well informed down there as to the appropriate names of political parties as we are up here.

Mr. Johnson: Je me demande—Mr. Chairman, I wonder since it is two minutes to one whether we might call it one o'clock?

The Deputy Chairman: Is it the pleasure of the committee to call it one o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

(Translation):

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Chairman, just before the house took recess, we were still dealing with the first item of the R.C.M.P.

While commercial shipping and even pleasure boating are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport, the R.C.M.P. is responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of the Canada Shipping Act and its regulations. That is why I am taking the liberty of dealing with this subject while we are considering estimates relating to the R.C.M.P. We are now at the start of the shipping season and everybody realizes that civilian authorities, especially municipal authorities in communities that have boating clubs, are quite interested in the matter and concerned about possible accidents at the height of the pleasure boating season.

We, in the riding of Chambly-Rouville, are fortunate enough to live on the banks of the splendid Richelieu river which rises on the

[Mr. Fulton.]

American border and ends up at Sorel. All along that grand river there are boating clubs, like those at Beloeil, Chambly and St. John. In those communities, quite a number of people—I might even say thousands of people—are interested in pleasure boating. The Beloeil boating club has several hundred members and it is my privilege to be one of them.

Now I know for having discussed the matter with the directors of those boating clubs, that children who indulge in such recreation in the summer time, just outside Beloeil and in the Chambly basin, are exposed to serious accidents because of the lack of supervision on waterways at those spots.

I know that, under the Canada Shipping Act, there is a control of light craft traffic. However, there are certain problems of jurisdiction with regard to the control of mixed traffic of pleasure craft and merchant ships. At Beloeil, more particularly, the boating club is located quite close to the McMasterville dock, where rather large barges take on cargoes of explosives for transport to the United States via the Richelieu. Now, it happens that when those commercial ships, returning to or coming from Sorel, head for the McMasterville dock, they travel at full speed up to the spot where the club's pleasure yachts are berthed and where there are a great many American tourists who expect to find a proper welcome in Canada.

Now, the captains or pilots, or any other person in charge of those ships, hardly bother to consider whether there are any small boats or craft tied up nearby so that frequently considerable damage is done to those light craft. This also represents a serious hazard for children bathing or using light pleasure boats in the vicinity.

Under a departmental order—and the minister may correct me if I am wrong—the R.C.M.P., generally referred to as "Mounted Police", has the responsibility of patrolling those waterways. In fact, under that order, the R.C.M.P. may control and ensure compliance with the regulations governing the traffic of both commercial and pleasure boats.

Even a provincial or municipal police officer has the right to see that the law is observed with regard to light boats, but there are serious doubts as to their jurisdiction over commercial shipping. Therefore, operators of commercial ships are little concerned with the local police, whether provincial or municipal.