

*Gunderson Slough Harbour Act*

Fraser River Harbour Commission is administering their particular property, and prefer the situation as it is at the present time. This agrees with the arguments put forward by the Hon. Member.

I therefore conclude, Mr. Speaker, that the Fraser River Harbour Commission has done an adequate job of administering all the property under consideration in this bill. It is the Government's view at this time that the status quo should be preserved and that this bill should not be given second reading.

**Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on what I initially thought was a fairly innocuous bill, one which was straightforward and one for which I had a tremendous amount of sympathy. Coming from a riding that has two Harbour Commissions, I understand the work of those Harbour Commissions. By and large, the comments made by the mover of this motion under whose name the bill stands are quite accurate when he stated that the real emphasis of Harbour Commissions is commerce, which covers the exports of lumber products in B.C. in particular and the shipping terminals. Harbour commissioners have done an admirable job and, as the previous speaker mentioned, most Harbour Commissions can show a profit. That is what they attempt to do.

When I looked at the bill, I considered the response of the fishermen in my riding of Nanaimo-Port Alberni to the facilities which those Harbour Commissions were providing for fishing enterprises. By and large fishermen in Port Alberni are quite happy with the provision of facilities in Port Alberni. There has been some increase in dock space there administered by the Harbour Commission but funded by the small crafts and harbours branch. There is a sense of co-operation between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Harbour Commission in Port Alberni which has put much emphasis on attracting fishermen to that community because they can appreciate the increase in commerce that brings to Port Alberni.

In Nanaimo we have a Harbour Commission that is quite involved in a major new port facility at Duke Point, and the eventual transfer, we hope, some time in the future from the assembly wharf in the downtown core. Emphasis there has been to commerce in the export industry of lumber products. There is some controversy in Nanaimo among the fishermen as to whether that Harbour Commission is really looking after their interests in the manner which the fishermen would like to see.

I think there is some merit in having some properties transferred over to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Nanaimo to generate some type of facilities for fishermen and possibly increase the availability of repair facilities in that community for the fishermen who are dependent upon those facilities. Because the mandates are different between the harbour commissions, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, certainly I see a need on the Fraser River for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to take over some properties. Whether it is Gunderson Slough or other areas, there is a need for both fisheries facilities as well as recreational boating facilities. There obviously is a growing need for recreational

facilities and moorage in the Lower Mainland. The Fraser River offers tremendous opportunities along those lines.

• (1630)

However, I question the Bill in two areas. First, some Members will be familiar with the recently published Pearce Report on the west coast fishing industry called "Turning the Tide into the Pacific West Coast Fisheries Industry". Dr. Pearce's Report advocates a transition over a period of the next ten years when approximately 4,500 fishing vessels in the industry will be reduced by 50 per cent. I wonder what the fishermen in the Gunderson Slough, Port Alberni, Alert Bay, Tofino, Bamfield and Ucluelet will think when they realize that half of their fleet will cease to exist within two decades. I wonder if the people in Gunderson Slough will need a fishing boat facility if the Government moves on the Pearce Report. Certainly, this Party is hoping that cooler heads will prevail and that the impact of reducing the fishing fleet will be considered both from the point of view of employment of fishermen and of the communities dependent upon the fishing industry in boat building and repairs. This includes communities such as New Westminster, Victoria and, more important, those coastal communities which have a greater reliance on the fishing industry than the metropolitan and urban areas.

If the Government follows through with the Pearce recommendations, I am somewhat doubtful whether it will make any difference for Gunderson Slough, which is a facility leased from the Harbour Commission and provided by the Harbour Commission, to be in the hands of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. I can offer my basic support for that facility becoming more public, because under the Harbour Commission it really becomes a private reserve to those lease holders of the docking facility, whether it be British Columbia packers or individual fishermen. Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans the Government would still receive rent from that facility in terms of moorage fees. It could upgrade the facility to include repair of vessels and nets as well as possibly installing facilities which could even provide the manufacture of fishing equipment which is so sadly lacking in British Columbia.

The implication to the fishermen is that it will continue to be a Harbour Commission facility with a type of exclusive placement of fishermen to that facility, or it will be a public facility which will perhaps meet the needs of fishermen more adequately. Certainly, fishermen who are not in that lease position now have indicated to me that they are in support of having that facility turned over to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans which, they feel, would respond more positively to any request they have for increased consideration of their industry.

The second area which makes this bill somewhat less innocuous than I had initially believed is the boundary description. On short notice it is difficult to determine how large an area is involved but the previous speaker from the Government side indicated that a fairly large piece of property is involved, some of which may be privately owned. That has been my