

on, now in that Muchalat Inlet were not there and the judgment of the pilots at that time was that this was not a safe channel to navigate in the dark. One of our B.C. pilots felt so strongly that this was the case he would not take that ship, even though it would have been his normal turn to do so. However, another pilot did go with the view of trying to persuade the Master not to leave until dawn. He was overruled by the Master and the ship left port in the evening. Whether this was primarily the cause of the ship now being at the bottom, I do not know. I am not sure this can be determined because the vessel is down at the bottom of Nootka Sound and something may have gone wrong with the controls or equipment on the vessel.

The fact of the matter is that had there only been a second or third mate on that ship who was the holder of a licence certificate there could have been no argument about the ship sailing if the Master said it was to sail. This was one of the thoughts in my mind which led me to propose my amendment to the bill. This is the kind of practical situation which can develop, because Masters responsible to their owners want to get their ships under way in order to be in another port at a certain time to finish taking on cargo, get back on the high seas and meet a loading schedule somewhere on the other side of the world. This is the attitude because it means dollars in the pockets of the owners, and the fact that a Master is making dollars for his owners is one basis upon which ship owners will naturally judge the efficiency of their Masters.

If this bill as it stands allows that kind of practice to become widespread, it seems to me in some respects we are defeating the basic purpose of the bill which is, as it says, to improve upon the existing provision of pilotage service in a more realistic way, with more local autonomy of judgment as to how detailed management should be carried out in respect of those areas where it is to be applied.

Mr. Speaker: It being one o'clock I do now leave the chair.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

[Translation]

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Ovide Laflamme (Montmorency): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the hon. member who moved an amendment to clause 15 and to his remarks on the need to provide for the greatest shipping safety within our territorial waters. I do not believe the requirements in this amendment would really improve the safety standards already established in the legislation for the simple reason that, within our shipping zones, there must be a pilot or a holder of a pilotage certificate.

Under an amendment to paragraph (a), subclause (2) of clause 15 of the act, it has been established that accord-

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ing to the legislation requirements, the holder of a pilotage certificate must, in the opinion of the local authority, have a degree of skill equivalent or at least equal to that of a licence holder. That is why I cannot understand very well why the issuing of pilotage certificates must be limited to Canadian ships only.

While attempting to grant special protection to a certain class we are perhaps depriving a good number of Canadian pilotage certificate holders from becoming crew members of a foreign ship if they so desire.

I am speaking at this stage of the study on this important bill, which was fully discussed in committee, first to express my personal appreciation for the discretion that was granted all members and for the real exercise of democracy that prevailed during consideration of this bill.

• (2:10 p.m.)

I would like to commend the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) who, while piloting this most complicated bill, has allowed hon. members the greatest freedom. The understanding of all the civil servants who participated in the study of this bill should also be recognized.

This is important since, when the bill was studied by the committee substantial amendments were proposed and almost all of them were given unanimous approval. I also commend the hon. member for LaSalle (Mr. Lessard), chairman of the Transport and Communications committee, who handled with much tact our proceedings on this important question.

Mr. Speaker, during several meetings which were perhaps exhausting but also most important, we were able to discuss in depth an extremely technical bill which is most important for Canadian shipping and which lays down major principles which I want to mention. Among these basic principles I would simply recall at this stage that for nine years we had been waiting for the report of the Royal Commission on Pilotage.

In its report the Commission came to the conclusion that pilotage authority just had to be decentralized. It is proposed in the bill to establish four local authorities which will be in a better position respectively to judge the problems posed by pilotage in Canadian waters.

Decentralization was requested by all interested parties and the bill includes such a proposal. I believe that unless we have absolutely no confidence in the local administration that will so be constituted, we reject the basic principle of this bill, aimed first of all at decentralization. If we do not trust the local administration, we indeed reject the basis of that bill, the essential principle on which the officials relied while drafting that legislation.

Besides decentralization, there is another essential principle that was put forward in the Bernier commission report—that exemptions from compulsory pilotage should be based in future not only on the tonnage or the seaworthiness of the ship but also on the qualifications of the person at the helm. This provides an additional and