

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

signed and if he will indicate to me in his answer if he can really grant my request.

[English]

Mr. Alex Patterson (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, this is the first occasion I have had to speak on either Bill C-2 or its predecessor which was introduced for second reading and debate on December 10, 1976. I reread the speech made by the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment (Mr. LeBlanc) on that occasion. I listened with real interest to the debate that took place on Bill C-2.

I do not want to delay the House for too long; however, there are a few matters on which I would like to comment as well as a few points with regard to the measure as it affects the province of British Columbia. The legislative provisions deal with two particular interests of our society in general. Both of these are of great importance to British Columbia. I refer to the fishing industry and also the recreation and tourist industry.

In introducing this bill, the minister stated, as recorded at page 2413 of *Hansard*:

This act will provide the necessary legislative authority to develop and administer commercial fishing and recreational harbours in Canada in order to meet the changing requirements of the fisheries and the growing needs of sports fishing and recreational boating.

It is well known that the fishing industry is of paramount interest to the province of British Columbia. Because of the extent of that industry, it is vital to the maintenance of a healthy economy as well.

With regard to the commercial fishery, direct employment in the British Columbia fishing industry is about 100,000 persons. The direct export value of the product is about \$250 million per year. The level of investment in the fishing fleet, equipment, plant and machinery is approximately \$1 billion. Therefore, we see that this is not a small sector of the British Columbia economic picture or just a small part of the national picture. It is of substantial concern and interest.

The question may be asked why I, living somewhat more distant from the coast than some of my colleagues, would have an interest in the fisheries. I would point out that consideration must be given to the fact that the Fraser fishery is the mainstay of the British Columbia fishing industry. I have the honour to represent part of the Fraser river area. It is questionable whether the industry could remain viable without the fishery of the Fraser river.

The British Columbia fishing industry is one of a very few industries in Canada which is entirely vertically integrated, responsible for harvesting, processing and marketing of renewable natural resources in the finished form. The Pacific Trollers' Association points out it is also labour intensive and highly export oriented. What makes the industry unique is its relative independence from any direct support or subsidy by public funds. It does not require elaborate tariff and non-tariff protection for its existence. The association presentation also points out that the industry accounts for some \$250 million

[Mr. Allard.]

annual in direct exports. Therefore, we can see that fisheries is an important industry in the province of British Columbia.

In our consideration of this industry, we ought to give a little more attention to the west coast fishery. Many times we find that we are left out of the discussion and debate. Since coming here some years ago, I have found that in many areas of activity British Columbia seems just a little bit too far away to be brought into the usual area of concern, discussion and debate.

Reference was made to the sports fishery. Statistics show that the sports fishery in Canada employs over 100,000 individuals and generates about \$1 billion for the economy. The present value of sports fishing boats in Canada is approximately \$2 billion. At one point in the minister's presentation he mentioned that a great proportion of this activity would be in the province of British Columbia. In participating in this debate, I want again to emphasize the importance of the fishing industry. The bill before us certainly does concern itself with this industry.

British Columbia's extensive coastline and relatively small number of wharves and facilities presents the possibility of a greater, healthier, and more economic industry if proper steps are taken, not only to catch up with present requirements, but to provide future growth opportunities.

Sometimes we are content just to look at the situation as it exists at present. We try to adapt our proposals, legislation and programs to meet the situation as it is at the moment. There must be vision in the matter of providing facilities. We have to look far beyond the present. If we are to have the growth that we desire, we must plan for the future.

I wish to make a few comments with regard to recreation. It is equally well known that our tourist and recreational aspects make British Columbia the land of recreation for Canadians. In spite of what the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling) said, we still believe that British Columbia is Canada's evergreen playground. It is true there are times when the green is covered by a white substance, but that only adds to the beauty and attractiveness of the area.

• (2122)

Recreation is not only a local effort. It is tied in with tourism which has become one of our principal industries. Some people might suggest that in the face of the tremendous problems confronting Canada the government should concentrate only on areas which are a major source of concern and that in the field of recreation the people directly concerned should provide whatever is required.

The recreational aspect of the bill has a wider application than just meeting the needs and desires of local people in the community. It has a bearing upon the tourist industry. If facilities are not available we shall not be able to attract tourists to our country, and to British Columbia in particular. This is a matter of major concern. There has been a great deal of debate about the imbalance of the tourist account and it seems to me this is an area which requires a good deal of attention.