

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, last night when I was interrupted at ten o'clock I was endeavouring to address myself to the bill in an effort to explain to the minister that if indeed we are going to pass this bill and levy fees on those fishermen who use harbour facilities, we should remember our priorities.

I would like to point out that before we approach fishermen on the subject of their paying fees so that they may tie up at harbours, we should have the proper harbour facilities. I would also like to mention the lack of co-ordination of effort between the various agencies which are trying to direct their attention to the provision of small craft harbours. Under the Canada Works Program many small craft harbours have been provided with help and the supplementation of funding by the small craft harbours division of the Department of Fisheries. Unfortunately, because of the lack of sufficient funding the proper harbours cannot be provided. And instead of getting proper engineering and design to put a harbour in place, whether it be a breakwater or a small craft harbour or wharf, it becomes impossible to put a small craft harbour in place as it should be for the benefit of the fisherman and for the benefit of the country.

Last week I made a quick tour through my district to witness and assess the storm damage which has actually obliterated many wharves and breakwaters, with damage reaching millions of dollars. Now they will have to be replaced and more millions of dollars spent. I am sure the minister's officials who are faced with that problem will be able to advise him on the difficulties of providing a reasonable wharf or harbour when funds are limited.

● (1512)

Last week I attended a meeting of another agency, the community employment strategy agency. They have a bit of funding to provide toward creating employment. As everyone in Newfoundland knows, the provision of employment will best be done by the creation, improvement, and expansion of our small craft harbours development policy. It is frustrating when the funding to provide proper facilities is limited. Millions of dollars are being wasted because the wharves float away as a result of storm damage. This is because they are not properly built.

Another problem to which the minister should address himself with regard to the small craft harbours on which a fee will be levied is the lack of capability, and the complete inefficiency of our dredging and icebreaking forces. During this season the fishermen cannot get out into the water. They cannot get their boats through the ice because of the inefficiency of our icebreaking services.

Another problem is the deployment of icebreaking services which are now in existence. Most icebreakers are deployed 300, 400 or 500 miles from the ice. Icebreakers are presently in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and in Quebec. If the minister would just look at a map, he would find it would be better if they were centrally located on the west coast of Newfoundland where there is a perennial ice problem.

A new icebreaker, the *Franklin*, will soon be coming into service. It will be deployed to the province of Newfoundland in order to try to overcome the present inefficiency. Not only will it provide a service which is needed, permitting the fishermen to get out into the water in order to get the fish, but it will provide 70 or 80 jobs that are badly needed in Newfoundland.

Last year we had a perfect example of dredging inefficiency and lack of capability. The fishermen had been promised dredging services for months and months. When the dredge finally arrived, it could not do the work. In some locations it ruined almost a complete season for the fishermen. Both the officials and myself have asked that a new type dredge be provided.

I hope the minister will give priority to protecting, supporting, and reinforcing the present facilities rather than trying to work the reverse through bills such as the one before us, which only creates hostility among the fishermen because they do not have the service required to take advantage of the stocks.

Another matter of importance is that the fishermen will be reluctant to pay fees. In order to build up our stocks, quotas have been placed on the fish over the past few years. There have been restrictions with regard to those who could get a licence to fish, whatever species. This is another detriment, charging the fishermen fees to use harbours which we do not have. I hope, with the various programs that are to come about, that this deficiency will be overcome.

The minister apologized to me for not being here because he is committed elsewhere. However, there is another matter I want to bring to his attention. Under the Canada Works Program there is no definition as to who owns a wharf. There are no criteria which state who has responsibility for a wharf after it has been built. In committee meetings, the minister and his staff indicated they would be responsible, but there is nothing to say whether it is owned by a municipality, town or group of fishermen. This must be clarified. I hope the law officers will look at that situation as it is causing a disruption and disadvantage to the fishermen.

The minister stated that under the bill wharfingers, harbour masters, or whatever you want to call them, will be hired. They will be responsible for a 50-mile radius. They must ensure that proper warning is given if damage should occur to a wharf. As stated in committee, this is building up another bureaucracy. I make this point because we have a situation which is contradictory.

With regard to protecting our rivers from poaching, there has always been a restriction by Treasury Board on funds to hire guardians for a long enough period to provide the protection that is needed. In every case we were told there were not enough funds. As I have pointed out a number of times, the guardians are hired on a 12 week basis, even though the season lasts three months. The Minister of Fisheries and the Environment (Mr. LeBlanc) cannot get the funds, but the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen) has enough funds to pay those same people two thirds of their salary for nine months of the year. Here is an opportunity to do a double job.