

*Introduction of Bills*

1. Federal user fees should be uniform in application from seaport to seaport and from coastal range to coastal range. (Uniformity maintains the current competitive relationship among ports.)

2. There must be a clear determination of the purposes for which fees are to be collected and the activities to which they are to be applied. (This is critical to the ultimate acceptability of any system adopted.)

If they do not know what it is for, why apply it? The letter continues:

3. Any fee system, as it may affect the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system, should be co-ordinated with United States' cost recovery programs and should give due consideration to total elimination of existing St. Lawrence Seaway system tolls.

4. Any user fee proposal should involve thorough public consultations with all user groups which should take place before initial application of fees and before any subsequent changes in levels of fees.

Ambassador Gotlieb's presence at the Commission's semi-annual meeting in Washington, D.C. March 12 was sincerely appreciated. In his remarks about Bill C-75 to the Commission, the Ambassador stated: "There is no doubt that your interests as a vitally affected party will not be ignored in the development of any user fee program." These are positive words, but final language from the legislative committee virtually mandates a segment charge (unequal between ports and port ranges) which could be devastating to Canadian and U.S. Great Lakes maritime and water transport dependent industries, leading to loss of maritime, industrial and agricultural jobs.

The Great Lakes Commission's views with respect to Clause 4 in Bill C-75 are supported by the Great Lakes Congressional delegation and regional maritime interests. A March 25 letter to Transport Minister Mazankowski from several Great Lakes Congressmen and a March 7 letter from Great Lakes Senators to Ambassador Gotlieb are attached for your reference.

The Commission believes that binational co-ordination regarding the future of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence transportation system is imperative now, more than ever before. The Great Lakes Commission along with the Great Lakes Senators and Representatives, is ready and willing to work with Canadian federal, provincial and private sector interests to see that our unique and shared Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River resource is maintained and improved for the benefit of our two countries and the world.

Sincerely,  
James Fish  
Executive Director

In light of the very serious implications of the Bill, in light of the loss of confidence we have already suffered in the St. Lawrence Seaway system as a result of unfortunate damage resulting in diminished traffic, and in light of the changes which are being suggested, I wonder what the Province of Quebec would have to say. As a last measure to plead for the delay we have proposed, I should like to read a letter which was directed to our Washington Ambassador, and I think our word should be honoured. It reads:

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

We wish to thank you for your recent letter concerning legislative action on Clause 4 of Bill C-75 currently pending before the Canadian Parliament. It was reassuring to us to learn that Bill C-75 was before a special legislative committee of Parliament for detailed analysis and that the Minister of Transport would be establishing a committee to consider the views of all affected parties prior to any decision to implement Coast Guard user fees.

The Executive Director of the Great Lakes Commission, Mr. James Fish, has informed us of his testimony on this issue before the legislative committee on February 13, 1986. We commend the Canadian Government for sponsoring hearings on this important legislation and view such hearings as a most constructive process. However, we, along with Mr. Fish, remain concerned about

the potential damage to Canadian and U.S. shipping and related activities stemming from imposition of a Coast Guard user fee in addition to the current seaway tolls.

These tolls have already been increased. It continues:

While the United States Government is currently considering user fee legislation for navigation projects, proposed parallel provisions in this legislation would provide for a rebate of or credit toward seaway tolls paid by shippers to the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. Such complementary provisions are important in preserving and preferably increasing the use of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway navigation system.

This communication is signed by U.S. Senators Alan J. Dixon; John H. Glenn, Jr.; Carl M. Levin; Rudy Boschwitz; Dan Quayle; William Proxmire; David Durenberger; Richard G. Lugar; Donald W. Riegle, Jr.; Bob Kasten, Jr.; Howard M. Metzenbaum; and Paul Simon. It is crucial that we maintain the confidence and goodwill of these important Senators, respect our word as a government if we are to move into the area of suicidal free trade rather than negotiate for freer trade by sector.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the Parties, and I think Your Honour would find unanimous consent to revert to the introduction of Bills so that we can take care of a piece of housekeeping at this time.

**Mr. Deans:** Mr. Speaker, in fact a discussion took place, but I simply want to say that I hope the Minister will attempt to organize his affairs a little better in the future and not impose upon the House in this way all the time.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to revert to the introduction of Bills?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION ACT

#### MEASURE TO ENACT

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-108, an Act relating to commercial arbitration.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Shall the Hon. Minister have leave to introduce the Bill?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.