

2, I presume this could refer to fish catches and that these could be seized and detained. Provision is also made for goods which might be spoiled to be disposed of, the proceeds being subject, of course, to the decision of the court as to whether the act which caused those goods to come on board was an offence under the legislation.

Since this bill deals with fisheries and recreational harbours in Canada, I should just like to mention one happy development which took place a week or ten days ago. I received a call from a community where floats should have been out two or three weeks ago, but because of the breakdown of the departments vessel floats were not in place for the main tourist weekend of May 24. I believe tourist vessels were standing off Sidney pier in my riding, some 500 of them, waiting to come ashore, but the floats had been taken out because of the winter winds and had not been replaced. A couple of calls to me and a couple of calls by me to Vancouver, Victoria and the fisheries interests there turned up the fact that the vessel operated by the Department of Public Works which normally puts those floats in place had broken down and that therefore the floats could not be put out.

However, the Sidney municipality and the Department of Public Works got together—something which should happen more often—and got the floats out for the next holiday weekend. When I came in to land on the Friday morning with a group of Canada-U.S. parliamentarians, the floats were not in place, but they were promised for the Friday night, and they must have been put out on the Friday or Saturday morning because on the Sunday morning the Canada-U.S. parliamentary group went out to do some cruising in the waters of Haro Strait to see what damage might occur if tankers came through those waters, and the floats were in place. I think the officials should be thanked for the speed with which they responded to the request of the local authorities.

When I was making inquiries about these particular floats, I was told one problem was that there was no breakwater and they were exposed to the winds and the waves which come in so readily from the southeast into Sidney harbour. Therefore, the floats have to be taken up during the winter. I do not know why this has not occurred to those who operate small craft harbours, but surely vessels which have come to the end of their floating life could be sunk and act as breakwaters off these unprotected harbours. After all, this was one manner in which the Mulberry docks played a role during the landings in France on the beaches of Normandy, and this could be adapted to our harbours to protect them from the winds. Did we learn nothing from the war? Did we learn nothing from these techniques? As a matter of fact, I have suggested that some of these 250,000-ton oil tankers might be the most appropriate vessels to sink for this purpose. They would be serving a much greater purpose, filled with cement and breaking the waves and the winds on some of our exposed harbours, rather than running around as dangerous vessels under doubtful command on the high seas and in our narrow waters. However, I leave that as a suggestion which might be taken up at some time.

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

● (1230)

Since we are talking about fishery harbours, I feel there is room for comment on the Canada-United States fisheries relations and agreements on the west coast. I have asked the minister to produce a text of the interim reciprocal fishing agreement. An English text was provided to me, but it was not a complete one; there seemed to be some gaps in it. I suppose that was because of the manner in which it was photostated. The top lines of several pages seem to be missing, but I will endeavour to have that sorted out.

It was the English text of the Canada-United States reciprocal fishing agreement which was sent to me as a courtesy by the parliamentary relations division of the department. In this letter I find the reason the text has not been tabled. It is because the French language text is currently being examined by United States authorities. I should have thought Canada could have been able to provide an authentic French language text of any signed agreement. Of course, a copy would be sent to the other signatory, because both texts are considered authentic. I am curious to find out whether any changes are suggested once it has been examined by our neighbours to the south. In this country of ours, which prides itself on its bilingual character, we should be able to produce authentic texts and authentic translations in both languages before we put a signature to either.

I feel we should have this agreement before us. I heard rumours that there have been exchanges of notes, aides memoires and letters back and forth between Ottawa and Washington concerning the interpretation of this agreement. I should indicate that this agreement has been signed by both countries, but not ratified. I have been told that diplomatic exchanges are privileged documents. This is a matter which the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) has been arguing about for a number of years. The hon. member has urged upon this government and previous governments that there ought to be complete disclosure of documents affecting Canadians. If they affect negotiating positions, certainly that is understandable. The interpretation of a particular clause in an agreement is a matter of public knowledge.

Mr. Alexander: This government plays with public secrecy.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Yes, but it is a cover-up.

Mr. Alexander: Certainly.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): It is extraordinary that diplomatic exchanges relating to this particular agreement should be considered privileged documents.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to have an explanation as to what the exchange of diplomatic notes and the signing of international agreements has to do with construction, maintenance and supervision of small craft harbours.

Mr. Alexander: If you cannot understand that, it shows you are not too clever.