

If dredging is required in Twillingate harbour in Newfoundland, whom will the Government charge? Is it going to charge the fish plant that uses the harbour? Is it going to charge the fishermen whose boats have to use the harbour? Is it going to charge the town council? There is no more free dredging under this Bill if the intent of the Bill is carried through, Mr. Speaker. There is no more free dredging by Transport Canada or by Public Works. Public Works cannot do the dredging because it has just sold or is selling its dredging machines for the sake of passing the work over to private enterprise.

● (1620)

Perhaps the most serious part of this Bill is the part we have not really dealt with, namely, aids to navigation. There will be a charge for aids to navigation. Now we will have a cost recovery on aids to navigation. That is a pretty serious matter, Mr. Speaker. As the Hon. Member for Egmont pointed out, with everything else coming down around everybody's ears, what a time to be saying we are now going to think about charging for ice-breaker services!

The fishery in Newfoundland is an absolute and total disaster. There are full-time fishermen going to the welfare office, yet, here we are telling them they have to pay for their phone calls to the weather office—I forgot that one. That is a good subject we have talked about in this Chamber—now that there will be a charge for navigational aids. Insurance on boats has just been upped. In some harbours the cost of tying up to a wharf has been upped three times. There has been an increase in the marine service centre fees. These people have been nailed through National Revenue. The fishery is an absolute disaster, and now the Government of Canada is bringing in a Bill to charge for dredging the harbour and for getting an ice-breaker to come in during the spring. Not only that, but if you have to be escorted or the company boat has to be escorted, there will be a charge for that as well. That is all in the same Bill. It is incredible to be telling fishermen of Newfoundland or the farmers of Prince Edward Island under which you are bringing a Bill into this Chamber that perhaps they will be charged for that service.

Just to drive this home to the Minister of Transport, does he know what most fishermen do now in the spring before they order an ice-breaker, Mr. Speaker? They get out their chain-saws. They dig out a channel with long chain-saws, the big ones, the three foot and two foot blades, and they dig away and cut big blocks around their boats. They lift up the blocks, and they use dynamite. Often Members in this Chamber get phone calls from fishermen asking whether there is any way to get the Government to pay for the dynamite. There is no way the Government will pay for the dynamite.

One time the Government of Newfoundland did pay for the dynamite. But that is after using the chain-saw to get the block of ice out. You work day and night until you get your boat a certain distance into the harbour. The rest of the boats are behind. I hear an Hon. Member on the other side. He is going to learn something if he will just listen. At that point out in the

harbour they then call the Coast Guard to bring the ice-breaker. If they have to pay for the ice-breaker—

Mr. Foster: And the chain-saw.

Mr. Baker:—the Hon. Member said “and the chain-saw”, that is right. The gas in the chain-saw is not cheap since this Government took over. I can assure you Sir, what the hon. gentleman is suggesting is that these fellows will be out there for six months cutting their way through the ice because there will be no ice-breaker. They cannot afford to pay for the cost of an ice-breaker to come in to their harbours and dig the harbours out.

Mr. Mazankowski: Can they afford to pay for the gas for the ice-breaker?

Mr. Baker: The hon. gentleman is asking me if they can pay for the gas in the ice-breaker. I know what the cost of an ice-breaker is. I can tell you that it is a pretty big cost. It is an incredible cost to operate a ice-breaker. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Mazankowski: Can they pay for half of it?

Mr. Baker: The Government of Canada should pay the whole cost. These fishermen should not have to pay for the cost, neither should the companies have to pay for the cost of the ice-breakers. I doubt whether the Minister of Transport in outlining this Bill made reference to Clause 4.

Mr. Mazankowski: Yes, I did.

Mr. Baker: He is nodding that he did. He did not talk about how much they were going to charge. He did not say, “Well, we might charge them. We might or we might not”. He simply outlined what was in this Bill. Later on during exchanges in the House he said, “Isn't it correct that people should have to pay for those services?”

The people of Canada pay for those services when they pay income tax. That is when they pay for these services. They should not have to pay for these services because of geography or where they live. They are paying enough now to the Government of Canada. They should not have to pay any more. Even to suggest in this Bill giving the Government of Canada the authority to levy a fee for such a thing is absolutely outrageous. It is just the same as when the former Minister of the Environment stood up and announced that she was going to charge people to phone the weather office.

All along we can see what the Government is doing to the fishermen. It is saying, “Look, hesitate before you phone the weather office because you have to pay. Hesitate before you phone the Coast Guard because you are going to have to pay. If you are out in a storm 100 miles off the coast, hesitate before you phone the Coast Guard because you may have to pay”. You may have to pay; you may not have to pay.

By bringing in this Bill the possibility is there that people will have to pay. The Minister of Transport should realize that the Coast Guard in Canada today performs functions not