

### *Fishing and Recreational Harbours*

members but there were a number of others on their feet and I was not able to catch Your Honour's eye. I feel I should now say just a few things about the criticisms those two hon. members have advanced. The House will have noticed, of course, that both are parliamentary secretaries. They probably feel that if they are to earn their additional remuneration from the Crown then they have a task to do. That task seems to be to rise on every occasion to praise their minister, and then to berate the opposition for not hurrying legislation through, irrespective of whether or not it has been given thorough examination. Mr. Speaker, our task is to examine legislation and determine whether it is in the best interests of the people we represent. That is what the hon. member for New Westminster was seeking to do.

Both the hon. member for Comox-Alberni and the hon. member for Niagara Falls endeavoured to make a great deal of the fact that the legislation has been before the House for two years. They accused members of the opposition of filibustering and holding up the legislation, and thus preventing fishermen and users of recreational boats from getting great advantages. As a matter of fact the hon. member for Niagara Falls attacked members on this side because we were not on our feet praising the minister and the legislation he has introduced. Mr. Speaker, we do not need anyone to tell us what our job is with respect to legislation. Our job is to examine it.

Nothing in the passage of this legislation through its various stages would indicate that members on this side of the House have unduly delayed it. It is true the legislation has been on the order paper for two years. It has not been before the House for two years. It was introduced last year and reached the committee stage. If the government had thought it was very important legislation, the House need not have been recessed or prorogued. It could have continued and dealt with that legislation.

● (1422)

When the House reassembled, the opposition parties co-operated with the government to the point where we did not insist that the legislation start all over again. Indeed we agreed that the legislation should be put on the order paper at the stage at which it was when the House recessed, with the result that the legislation started again at the committee stage. If the members will look at it, it is Bill C-2 which is the first piece of legislation on the order paper, because Bill C-1 is a pro forma bill. There has been no undue delay. There is no attempt now to delay the bill or to filibuster the bill. But I think that the government, throughout the years I have been here has failed to have a consistent policy with respect to small harbours and ports.

I am not placing the blame on the present minister entirely, Mr. Speaker. He has been endeavouring in the last two or three years to work out a policy, but it has never been clearly formulated and it has never been given enough money to make it an effective program. It is one of the aspects of the govern-

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ment's over-all responsibilities, in my opinion, of which no government can really be proud.

In seeking to defend the government's legislation against the criticisms which were advanced by the hon. member for New Westminster, the hon. member for Comox-Alberni, speaking in the House on February 1, 1978, as reported at page 2446 of *Hansard*, put forth some preposterous arguments in defence of this legislation, and as a reason for some of the clauses contained in this measure. For instance the member said:

This type of clause is required so that we are not bound by this legislation as we were by the old Government Harbours and Piers Act under which it was possible to lease facilities only to municipalities, provinces, or shipping companies. Very recently, for example, a fishermen's union local wished to lease a facility on the west coast in a community in my constituency—Sointula.

He goes on later in the statement and says:

But, Mr. Speaker, when a group of fishermen, on their own initiative, wish to take over the management of a small wharf or pier in an isolated area, we are prevented under the present legislation from allowing them to do so. Under the new legislation we shall be able to allow people such as those in a union local to take over a pier and run it to their best advantage—

There are two things wrong with that ridiculous statement. The first is that the government has been leasing wharves on Vancouver Island to individuals for a number of years to my knowledge. It did it because under the old legislation it referred to a person, and a person or persons could lease wharves from the government and they have done so. Secondly if the purpose of this legislation is to give power to lease, to license, or to enter into agreements with respect to these wharves with persons other than the federal government, is because the government wanted to make it possible for a fishermen's union or a co-operative to take over a wharf, all it had to do was amend the original legislation and make that provision specific and clear.

That is not what the provision provides at all. The provision says in clause 8:

The Minister may, subject to the regulations,

- (a) lease any scheduled harbour or any part thereof to any person;
- (b) grant a licence to any person for the use of any scheduled harbour or any part thereof; and
- (c) enter into an agreement with the government of any province or any agency thereof for the occupancy and use of any scheduled harbour or any part thereof.

There is a great deal of difference, Mr. Speaker, from the standpoint of commercial fishermen, between the government leasing or licensing to a municipality, an agency of the provincial government or a fishermen's co-operation or a fishermen's union, and on the other hand leasing which would have been that of government facilities to private entrepreneurs, because as the hon. member for Comox-Alberni himself admitted in his remarks, there is no schedule in this legislation. There is no provision for setting a schedule.

If the government leases one of the government wharves to an agency of a provincial government or a municipality, to a union local or co-operative, then there is some public pressure to keep the schedule of fees at a reasonable figure. But there is no such protection if that government wharf is going to be leased to a private entrepreneur, particularly on Vancouver