

government is working on the problem. I think hon. members should know a little bit about what the federal government is doing. While the government is making an effort, there are other things that could be done.

On April 11 of this year, the St. Clair and Detroit River Vessel Speed Regulations were gazetted. The Ministry of Transport established these regulations for the purpose of navigational safety, the preservation of navigational channels and the protection of riparian interests. The speed limits apply to all vessels, other than pleasure yachts, having an over-all length of 65 feet or more. They were established after months of lengthy discussions with interested parties. They are based on extensive technical studies and field observations conducted jointly by the engineering staffs of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

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The schedule to the regulations specifies the maximum upbound and downbound speed, expressed in miles per hour over the bottom, in the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers from Fort Gratiot Light to the Detroit River Light, excluding Lake St. Clair. These regulations will be complemented by similar regulations established by the American authorities for those parts of the river under their jurisdiction. Enforcement of the regulations is being carried out in the Detroit River by ministry officials and the RCMP with the aid of a shore installation which enables measurements to be made over a known distance to determine the speed of passing ships. From May 25 to September 13 inclusive, 707 commercial vessels of 65 feet in length or over were monitored passing the Amherstburg area.

I keep bringing up the point of vessels 65 feet and over because I think one area where improvement can be made is in the reduction of the length of boats to which these regulations apply because, although this would not apply to Lake St. Clair, such boats cause damage in the smaller lakes and rivers. Of this total to which I have referred, approximately 5.5 per cent exceeded the speed limit sufficient to warrant legal action being taken. A chronic offender appeared in court on September 20 and pleaded guilty. He was fined \$50. I consider this fine to be rather small considering the damage done to shorelines. Warning notices have been sent to the remaining offenders. The intention is that all vessels exceeding the speed limit will be prosecuted. I think operators of vessels should be aware of this warning, and I think we should be sure that we follow it up. I hope that fines in excess of \$50 would be more the rule than the exception.

In drafting speed regulations of this type, it is necessary to take into consideration the interests of the marine community as a whole. This requires the establishment of speeds that will be realistic and meet, as far as possible, the conflicting interests in the area. Speed limits that are set too low will impose unfair economic burdens on commercial vessels; these added costs will eventually be passed on to the general public when purchasing consumer products. Conversely, speed limits that are too high may cause extensive damage to shore property and, in addition, high speeds may encourage unsafe navigational practices to the detriment of all concerned.

Damage to Shoreline by Passing Ships

An amendment to the St. Clair and Detroit River speed regulations was given Privy Council approval on the 31st of August, 1973, and published in the *Canada Gazette*, Part II, on September 26, 1973. This amendment will give these regulations more flexibility by allowing for a temporary reduction of speed limits, as circumstances require, in any part of the river to which the limits apply. This requirement for more flexibility has become necessary due to exceptionally high water levels in the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers which has brought strong protests from riparian interests who have been exposed to extensive property damage.

I can understand the need for flexibility depending on water levels, winds and so on. In addition, it has been proposed that the regional director for the central region, marine services, Ministry of Transport, be granted the power to temporarily lower the speed limit for the safety of navigation or for the protection of persons or property at or near the shore. A speed limit established by the regional director will come into force upon its publication in a notice to shipping or a notice to mariners and will remain in force until its modification or cessation is published in a subsequent notice to shipping or notice to mariners. Speed limits are in force in many of Canada's public harbours and are administered by the various harbour authorities. This is certainly the case in the harbour that is in my constituency, the Thunder Bay Harbour.

In particular, the Ministry of Transport has encouraged the Windsor Harbour Commission to enforce speed limits for vessels of less than 65 feet in length within harbour commission boundaries. Between Montreal and Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority is responsible for the establishment of maximum speed limits. Seaway Notice No. 4 of 1972 sets the limits in specified sections of the waterway for vessels in excess of 40 feet in length. These limits are as a result of extensive studies that have taken place over many years. The objective in the St. Lawrence is similar to that in the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers; to establish realistic speeds that will meet the requirements of the marine community as a whole.

A further seaway notice No. 5 of 1972 introduced, as a result of wave investigations, speed limits of 13 miles an hour over the bottom in the Canadian waters of the St. Lawrence River in the area from Grenadier Island to Howe Island. On May 11, 1972, the St. Lawrence Seaway reaffirmed the speed limits in other areas of the system and brought to the attention of mariners the fact that complaints were still being received from the public regarding excessive vessel speeds causing shoreline property damage and creating the risk of possible serious injury or loss of life. This notice also warned the mariner that surveillance crews were using radar to enforce the speed limits on a round-the-clock basis. A reduction of the maximum speed by the St. Lawrence Seaway for the Beauharnois Canal was promulgated in seaway notice No. 9 of 1972.

On March 21, 1973 the St. Lawrence Seaway re-established speed limits in the river between Montreal and Lake Ontario. The notice of March 21 was followed by notice No. 7 of 1973, dated March 27, 1973 which included a plan showing the designated speed limit areas in the Montreal-Lake Ontario section of the seaway. This notice