

*Motions*

a small craft harbour, or a pier with loading and unloading facilities.

The people who run the programs in the regional offices are completely unwilling, or have been in the past, to go into those communities and talk to the people about development. They have been very unreceptive to suggestions that plans should be put on the drawing board for those communities to service that industry in addition to the commercial fishing industry, and to service the small processing plants that tend to develop around those areas to handle that product quickly and effectively in order that the benefits from the product are maximized, and it can move quickly from the area where it is grown or taken into the markets.

Not only is the Government ignoring this, but in cases that I have specifically dealt with regional managers are stating that they do not even wish to talk to those people or listen to their story, that their minds are made up. They state that there is enough harbour facility, there is not the economic justification, or there is too much processing. They have no vision of the needs of the community or the industry, and the potential of the area. It is a tragedy that I feel can be rectified by the Government ordering people to move quickly in this matter.

I see that I am drawing rapidly to the end of my limited time here, and I have 20 more pages of very thoughtful material for the House to consider.

In summary, the important aspect of the small craft harbours issue is that in the past the Government has completely failed to put an orderly process in place. If I were to give a single recommendation to the House, it would be to move the whole business of prioritizing the small craft harbour activities away from departmental officials to an advisory body. That body would represent the organizations by election and nomination of those organizations to sit on an advisory body. It would then provide advice to the Government on what harbour facilities are needed and where they should be developed.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. St. Julien:** Madam Speaker, I can appreciate the concerns of the Hon. Member for Comox—Powell River (Mr. Skelly) over small craft harbours.

In a region such as ours, Abitibi, a number of localities really deserve to be included in this program. Strangely enough, we have been hearing about eastern and western Canada, but this is the first time ever a government has been listening to the residents of a vast region like Abitibi. I have two examples which might interest the Hon. Member: Belcourt, a small village close to Senneterre, and Louvicourt, the gateway to Abitibi. Department officials came to see the people and for the first time ever they discussed access to lakes which people considered important. We did get some funding recently, this was last month, and discussions are continuing.

I should like to ask the Hon. Member whether remote regions like ours—Abitibi—are entitled to their share. Do you

think it is important? Nobody says it has to be by the ocean-side. But I am saying that we have our share, we will continue, and it is important for a region like ours to have programs and funds for small craft harbours.

*[English]*

**Mr. Skelly:** The Hon. Member for Abitibi (Mr. St. Julien) has raised an interesting question. To develop it a little further, the question is in relation to where the federal jurisdiction lies. This Government has been giving a mixed message. When it started out it stated that it wanted nothing to do with anything except established commercial fishing harbours. The problem is that commercial fishing goes on all over. There is a great freshwater fishery.

Another area in which the Government became involved years ago was with recreational harbours and the developing of major recreational facilities. Then this Government stated it did not wish to become involved in recreational facilities. That is something that Abitibi certainly could be interested in, whether it is moving hunters, people who travel in the lake regions, or the commercial fishing that goes on in the lakes. Indeed, there are two main areas, recreation and tourism, and the commercial fishing fleet.

Essentially now the Government is coming back and stating that it made a mistake, it is interested in the recreational tourist aspect. In that regard, it certainly could be looking at freshwater commercial fisheries in an area such as Abitibi, and other areas of the country. If in fact the freshwater commercial fishery is felt to be an important part of the local economy, the Government has to quit going both ways on this issue. It has to stand up and say that it will take responsibility for that infrastructure and get rolling in Abitibi and other areas of the country where the freshwater fishery is important. The harbour facilities are needed there for safety, moorage, and as infrastructure to aid the local economy.

Tourism and recreation is another area; sports fishing, hunting, people who wish to enjoy the wilderness in a water environment, and it is an area especially important for native communities attempting to develop these facilities. Is this indeed a federal responsibility? At one time the Government said that it was not, but in some areas it has stated that it is.

We need to answer the question of the Hon. Member for Abitibi and other Canadians who want to know where they stand and why another community can receive the support of several millions dollars for a recreational and tourist harbour, yet a community with the same type of needs is told by the Government that it does not get involved in that.

One has to ask, is it because of the political affiliation of the Member who represents that area, or is it the size of the donations that have been contributed by those communities to the political Party? It is difficult to say. At the beginning of this Parliament the Government stated it was no longer interested in participating in areas that were not exclusively within its mandate. Its definition of the mandate appeared to