

- 4 -

east and west coasts, it had not been applied to fishermen on the Great Lakes. There was much to be said in favour of removing all fishing vessels from the scheme except those fishing vessels that actually did ply the high seas and occasionally berthed in foreign ports. On the other hand, fishermen generally, particularly on the east coast, were in a very low income group and pursued a rather hazardous occupation. It might prove to be a real hardship if the benefits under Part V of the Canada Shipping Act were now to be withdrawn. Moreover they were not eligible for benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act.

(c) It was argued that no government owned ships should be allowed to participate in the scheme since the government should not be placed in the position of granting a form of health insurance to the crews of departmentally owned and operated vessels while similar benefits were not provided to other employees in the Public Service and indeed to the public generally. It was pointed out, on the other hand, that many government owned ships performed precisely the same sort of service as privately owned vessels and that there might be dissatisfaction and recruiting difficulties if sailors on government owned vessels were denied benefits to which sailors on privately owned vessels doing similar work were entitled.

(d) There seemed little doubt that the dues levied on vessels participating in the scheme should be increased. Careful consideration should be given, however, to the formula proposed by the Minister of National Health and Welfare in order to ensure that the rates imposed would not result in undue hardship on fishermen and possibly others.

3. The Cabinet noted the report by the Minister of National Health and Welfare on proposed amendments to Part V of the Canada Shipping Act with regard to the dues levied on ships for sick mariners benefits and on the inclusion or exclusion of various categories of vessels, and deferred decision on the proposal pending further consideration of the problems involved, with particular reference to fishing and government owned vessels, by the Minister of National Health and Welfare in consultation with other Ministers most immediately concerned.

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