

Canada Shipping Act

pretation, but these services include navigation, dredging, vessel traffic services, ice-breaking services and escorting services.

The second part of the clause goes on to say that even if the services were not actually performed, the Canadian Coast Guard probably could still charge for that service. The rationale behind that, of course, is that when the Coast Guard is called to perform a service it can still charge for that service even if it is no longer required.

The clause goes on to point out that interest will be charged on late payments. It gives the Government in Council—the Minister of Transport—the right to impose that charge with interest. Furthermore, the Government can go to court to collect that payment. It also gives the Government the right to enter into agreements with provincial administrations.

On the hand the Minister say that this clause does not really mean anything but, on the other hand, he asks why these people should not have to pay. That is absolute nonsense. Think of what you may be confronted with in your own riding, Mr. Speaker, if Hibernia came on stream in the future and they had to bring in oil to service the Petromont refineries. What about those who must pay for ice-breaking services out of the Quebec region?

The Minister of Transport is suggesting that he will balance costs on the basis of where Canadians live. For example, anyone who needs an ice-breaker for their port will have to pay for that. If you happen to live in northern Newfoundland, Labrador or on Prince Edward Island and your fish business, potato business or any other business requires an ice-breaker during the winter, you will have to pay for it. What is the function of the Government of Canada today, according to that logic? Why not pass all of these services on to private enterprise? The Minister is suggesting that everyone should move south. He is asking, why should they not have to pay to have the Coast Guard send an ice-breaker to dig out a ferry run for ferries that service islands? The Minister and the Government must realize that we live on islands. I have constituents who live on islands and they pay a price for living on islands. The price of living there is that transportation is in doubt at various times of the year.

However, the Government wants to turn around now and say that they will have to pay for breaking up that ice in their port. It is telling those who have a fish business and employ people during the winter that they should pay now to have an ice-breaker come in. There are certain ports that service pulp and paper mills, such as the Port of Botwood, that are open year round. According to this Bill, the Minister is saying that there should be a charge to keep that port open year round. If you use that logic, quite obviously it would be much cheaper for a shipper to move his entire operations to a port that never has any ice.

That is strange logic coming from a Government that promised so much prior to the election campaign. It promised better ice-breaking facilities for eastern Canada. It promised better ice-breakers. However, when it came to power, in its first financial statement, the Coast Guard was included in a

cut of \$51 million among other services such as aids to navigation. That was the first act that the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret) imposed on the Minister of Transport. Now the Minister must attempt to show the Cabinet that he is attempting to recover costs by introducing user fees.

There is no question that this clause should not be included in the Bill. It will not be included in the Bill if the Hon. Member for Egmont has anything to do with it. The Hon. Member mentioned that this is a particularly bad Bill in which to include such a clause. He spoke about fishermen and farmers. It was not too long ago when the former Minister of Fisheries and Oceans stood in this Chamber and announced an increase in moorage fees, the fee to tie up a boat at a wharf that was built with government money. It was not long ago that the Government announced an increase in the cost of insurance on boats. First, it tried to eliminate that scheme and then it tried to privatize it. No private company in Canada would even consider this scheme. This insurance scheme was devised by the Government of Canada because no private insurance firm would ever offer the insurance. The Government turned around and tripled the rates.

However, not content with that, it took another look at its Crown corporation, Fisheries Products International—to which a lot of ice-breaking services have been provided on the north coast of Newfoundland—and made an announcement that would essentially get rid of 15 fish plants in Newfoundland. It did not mention the number of employees affected by this announcement, but it will sell these plants. It has not said what will happen to those fish plants if they are not sold.

There is a total of 2,775 employees involved in those fish plants. Fishermen and employees in those plants do not know what they will be doing two years from now.

Not content with that, the Government took further steps with respect to the Department of National Revenue. It has changed its policy so that there are no more third-party demands. What does that mean?

Mr. Forrestall: What does this have to do with the Bill?

Mr. Baker: The hon. gentleman asks me what this has to do with the Bill. Obviously, it deals with the amendment by the Hon. Member for Egmont to the clause dealing with charges to be levied. Will the Government charge the Government of Newfoundland, the Government of Prince Edward Island or the people who ordered the ice-breaker? Will it charge the boat owners? Will it charge the entire population of the province on a percentage basis? Obviously, the Government will charge those who need the ice-breaking services.

The people whom the Government will have to charge for navigational aids, ice-breaking services and dredging are those who need that service. Those people are primarily fishermen in Newfoundland. Who else needs to have a harbour dredged if it is not the very people who want to move goods and services through that port?