

*Canada Shipping Act*

weather gets cold and the cold temperatures of the icy waters will kill a man in 60 seconds if he goes in. When the ice moves in on the coastline it remains frozen solid 15 and 20 feet thick along the shoreline separating their boats and themselves from the resources of the sea from November or December until June and, in some years, July. If mother nature does not come to move that ice in June, occasionally my constituents and friends call upon the Government of Canada to send an icebreaker to break that ice. One sweep comes through and breaks it up and helps the wind move it off. It used to be when the ice sat there they would hunt for seals in the spring of the year. They cannot do that anymore so they want to go fishing. After a long winter of unemployment insurance, which my fishermen are grateful for but would rather not have if they could be working, they want that ice moved because they want to get back to work and put bread and butter on the table. The Minister is saying in this legislation that they can get back to work, they can put bread and butter on the table, the Government of Canada will move the ice as it has for decades, but now they are going to pay. Someone has to pay. For a Canadian living in Port au Choix, Flower's Cove, Anchor Point or Trout River, the cost of being a Canadian has gone up. The cost of being a Canadian on Vancouver Island, where these facilities are needed, is going up.

• (1200)

Those of you in this great maritime nation who occupy our Pacific or Atlantic coastline will pay for the privilege of living in areas which already suffer rates of unemployment much higher than the national average. I think that puts a little bit of a human face on this clinical legislation, this clinical Clause 4, cost recovery. When this kind of measure is passed, you place on the backs of some of Canada's most hard-pressed citizens an economic burden they simply cannot bear. That is the kind of measure the Government proceeds with.

As I said earlier, I do not speak just for fishermen, be they in Newfoundland or elsewhere. There are others who will be negatively affected by this Bill, both in this country and outside. Virtually every witness who appeared before the legislative committee on Bill C-75 expressed concern about Clause 4. The fishermen did not come and say they do not want to pay anything more. The people plying the Great Lakes did not come and say they do not want to pay anything more. The Council of Boating Organizations of Canada did not come and say they do not want to pay anything more. They simply asked the Government if it would mind telling them what it expects them to pay before this authority is given to the Minister, that is all. Even though this has never been done before in the history of the Department, these people did not say they were not prepared to dig deeper in their pockets to find the last few spare pennies and cough them up. They were only saying that before Parliament gives the Minister the authority to impose these charges, they want to know what it was going to cost them, what is their share.

Let us examine together whether or not in the course of trying to make the goose lay one more golden egg the Government will kill the goose. Let us try to find out, before we try and make the St. Lawrence Seaway lay some more revenues on the Government of Canada, whether we will kill the Seaway. The Government has even managed to hit farmers in this Bill. Potato farmers in P.E.I. are going to pay for ice-breaking services so they can get their potatoes to market. The cost of raising those potatoes is two or three cents a pound more than what they sell for. They are operating at a loss. The farmers are saying let them find out before you impose an additional charge on them whether or not you are going to break their backs. Fishermen are saying the same thing. The Government says no, trust it, give it the power, the gun and the ammunition and they will find out what those charges are going to be a year from now.

I have in my hand a telex to Mr. Forrestall, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport. They are contacting him to express the very serious concerns of Prince Edward Island fishermen regarding some provisions included in Bill C-75. They wanted their comments expressed to the committee studying the proposed legislation. Fishermen are concerned about the long range implications for them of the amendments in Clause 4 of the Bill to the Canada Shipping Act.

They go on to point out that if the charges are imposed on the fishery in that province in an indiscriminate manner, it could break the back of the fishery in that province. I do not know whether that has been responded to or acknowledged in committee, but certainly the message has not gotten through.

Who else has opposed Clause 4? The Council of Boating Organizations of Canada says Clause 4 departs from the principle of cost recovery by Government, that principle being based on the theory of user pay. It is their contention that Parliament should not delegate a taxing power to the Canadian Coast Guard. The Great Lakes Waterways Development Association says the clause as it stands is too broad in scope and as a result has the potential of causing major disruption to the lake shipping industry and shippers with no assurance that it will achieve its announced objective of deficit reduction. It is a wonderful day in this country when we can get fishermen from P.E.I. and Newfoundland and the St. Lawrence Ship Owners Association involved in the same debate, saying the same thing. When has that ever been seen before? Those in the corporate boardrooms and the fellow sitting at the end of the wharf on top of his lobster pots are saying the same thing and coming to the same conclusion.

The St. Lawrence Ship Owners Association says it does not agree that we should give the Government a blank cheque which would allow it to set a fee system about which they know nothing at present. I mentioned the farmers getting into the act. The Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia came before the legislative committee. They urged the committee to consider the competitive position of exports and the port position. The Government can recover costs, but they can be out of business because they do not know what the