

democratic way during the study of this famous bill, one has to take it with a grain of salt.

The story of democracy is rather the story of pressure because it is known that the association of pilots had delegated one of its members to the committee and requested an hon. member to present many amendments. But after a few days of negociation, the member who had introduced the main amendment was forced to withdraw it under pressure from the authorities because it contradicted senior officials in the Canadian government.

• (2:40 p.m.)

Being very much aware of the excellent work done by the Royal Commission on Pilotage, I am disappointed that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) did not see fit to accept all the recommendations of the Commission, especially that which to me is the most important, pilotage on the St. Lawrence River.

Clause 14(1) states that the authority can determine areas of compulsory pilotage.

I believe that such power is to be feared, though I realize that it could be checked through some rule or commission. I am convinced that there are areas of the St. Lawrence where no pilotage authority should be allowed to overrule compulsory pilotage provisions.

The most important places insofar as Canadian shipping is concerned are the rivers and waterways most sensitive with respect to the Canadian economy as a whole. Nobody could suggest that the St. Lawrence River is not one of them.

Besides, I could never support a decision to deprive of their jobs Canadian pilots and their families. For those reasons, I take strong exception to the clauses of this bill which could lead to the removal of the regulation requiring the presence of a Canadian pilot on-board ships in the St. Lawrence River.

In that connection, I would like to quote parts of Part I of the report of the Royal Commission on Pilotage. On page 233, under the title "Freedom of Pilotage Service", one can read the following:

Local knowledge and experience in local navigation are the ultimate and most essential requirements for safe navigation in confined waters. Since the *raison d'être* of organized pilotage is to provide shipping with the services of qualified navigators who are experts in navigating local confined waters, an efficient and adequate pilotage service is the ultimate means of enhancing safety of navigation.

As a rule, compulsory pilotage should be imposed: (a) on Masters who do not possess the necessary degree of local knowledge to navigate their ship or navigation unit safely; (b) in ship channels where a maritime disaster would seriously affect the economy of the country and the interest of the public.

Because pilotage is the most effective way of achieving safety of navigation, it should come under the jurisdiction of the authorities responsible for the safety of navigation, wherever such safety is of vital importance to the country. Conversely, the involvement of these authorities is not as necessary where the safety of navigation is not an essential national concern.

Here is now the most important part of the text:

For instance, nowhere is the safety of ship channels more vital to Canadian interests than on the St. Lawrence River.

24171-16

Pilotage Act

Considering the great importance of pilotage on the St. Lawrence River, I think the provisions on compulsory pilotage should be included in the legislation and that the rather broad powers referred to on page 233 of Part I of the report be given to authorities. Furthermore, the Commission suggests that the future legislation on pilotage deal mainly with safety of navigation.

Surely navigation is nowhere more important than on the St. Lawrence River.

In fact, the St. Lawrence River is treacherous, and this has been recognized by the Commission. I live in Don-nacona and I can see the Quebec City bridge from my house. This waterway is 30 miles long and three miles wide, yet when a ship runs aground everyone notices. As long as the whales stay in the water, nobody cares. But as soon as a whale emerges, the people of the village come rushing to see what is the commotion.

Along the St. Lawrence River, especially in the Port-neuf region, you do not have to go on the beach. From my window, I once saw a ship around at Saint-Nicolas; at Saint-Augustin, on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, I could see another ship, outside the channel, on the reef. Recently, the same thing happened at Cap-Santé; a ship went out of the channel and it looked for a moment as if it might run aground on the coast. Then the strollers collected along the shore, looked on and worried.

Not too long ago, the same thing happened in Leclercville. A few years back, there was a shipwreck in the Petite Rivière Saint-François in which Chinese sailors perished. And, closer to Quebec City, in the channel at the bottom of the river near the Île d'Orléans, another wreck still remains a danger.

There is already too much freedom under the regulations. Pilotage duties are being charged to ships entering the river, but there is nothing to force them to retain the services of a pilot. So, you get a pretty fair idea of what happens to those regulations that are often applied according to the captain's or the shipping companies' sense of responsibility. The St. Lawrence is dangerous. A maritime disaster could greatly affect the Canadian economy and the public interest. The Channel is indeed of vital significance to the country.

So, on the national level, the St. Lawrence channel should be a seaway where compulsory pilotage is guaranteed. I would not like to see such a decision left to one administration with only the possibility to appeal to the minister. I would rather like to see compulsory pilotage on the St. Lawrence included in bill C-246 and at a later stage, I will move an amendment to this effect.

Yet, I would like to emphasize the situation of pilots; the report admits that pilotage on the St. Lawrence is of extreme importance. To me, the best way to ensure good pilotage on the river is to require Canadian pilots to be on duty on all ships sailing on the river. To my mind, no other means is adequate to comply with navigation security standards.

At the same time, it must be kept in mind that pilotage is a special profession which requires a long and difficult training, which means that pilots, although experts in this field, could not easily adjust to other types of employment. Indeed, there are not many fields in which