

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

this discrimination come to a halt forthwith, without any excuses whatsoever. It has been said that those presently employed by the department have so many duties that they cannot collect wharfage fees. If that is the case, add someone to the staff or add a little extra duty to those already there. However, let us not continue this discriminatory structure in perpetuity against anyone in Canada.

I am also concerned by the fact that this bill suggests there shall be an assessment of harbours. I presume that means a classification of harbours that will be done by members of the department. If it is deemed to be unimportant, what happens to that harbour? The measurement is to be assessed by the measurement of fish landings. In that case, there are many ports on which we will never spend another dime. The fishermen in the seining fleets may never land a fish in the port which they call home. The seining fleet will deliver its large catch to concentrated areas for processing, and return home. They will not land at the port from which they operate. Therefore, if we assess some of our ports on that basis, they will disappear.

● (1650)

As for the lobster fishing industry, lobsters are deemed to be landed when they are brought ashore and put in the pound. There are a dozen lobster pounds along the shores of the Atlantic Provinces which would have provided proper measurement for making a large expenditure. However, the lobster fisherman would be given no protection, no improvement of his facilities, if the lobsters are recorded as landed when inspected by the department's inspectors. This is no guide. These coastal fishermen are not equipped to travel 10, 15, 20 miles along the coast to fish lobsters or any other kind of fish. They live in an area with which they are familiar and which they are capable of fishing, and that is the area which must have the port facilities to accommodate their fishing fleet. A harbour cannot be assessed by virtue of fish landings; that is not an accurate measurement in any way, shape or form.

A schedule of harbours is to be promulgated by regulation. Fishermen are not competent to keep up with regulations as they are changed or replaced by new ones. Will the Department of Fisheries undertake, for instance, to submit to every licensed fisherman along the coast each regulation with respect to harbours which he uses in advance of its being enforced so that these fishermen have the chance to ask their lawyer to read it? Because I cannot read some of these regulations, and I do not think some fishermen can read or understand them either. Or is it the case that we are going to continue to operate ports and our fishing industry by regulation emanating from Ottawa or some other cavernous place where regulations are made by someone who has no knowledge of the industry and their legal effect on the industry?

There are certain aspects of the bill regarding which the Minister of Fisheries, and provincial departments, can co-operate; but in this bill I detect another attempt not to co-operate with the provinces in regard to fishing harbour facilities but, rather, to transfer the national expense of such facilities to a

[Mr. McCain.]

provincial treasurer. This is not what Ottawa should be all about. The idea suggests to me that if the department does not want to fix up a port—perhaps tourism is a little side issue here—it will make a deal, say, with the province of New Brunswick, or with an individual, or with a corporation. It is the government of Canada's responsibility to provide these facilities for the use of the public, not to avoid providing facilities required by the public or to transfer the expense of such facilities to a provincial treasurer. I think this is what is implied in clause 5—that the government may make a deal with a person, a corporation or a province—and I deplore that. It is definitely in keeping with the way the department has been operating over the past few years, when there has been great neglect. If the government can transfer this responsibility, they may also transfer the blame for this neglect.

I suppose it has always been the right of the government of Canada, under the law, to lease a harbour or part of a harbour, but I would feel very much happier with this bill if in clause 8 the government would undertake to have consultations with people living in the area of the harbour who have used it traditionally for any purpose. But there is no obligation under this bill upon the government to consult the public prior to the leasing of a harbour to an individual or corporation. I think this presents a danger to the area I come from. I would ask the government to reconsider this provision to the extent that this can be done only after proper public hearings are held in the area concerned—not in the ivory towers in Ottawa.

Clause 9(b) gives me great cause for concern. I am as concerned about the environment as any member of this House, but I am more concerned at the fact that there are already three other pieces of legislation under the direction of the minister governing the people of Canada in respect to pollution of waters and lands. We have legislation concerning inland waters pollution, coastal waters pollution and offshore waters pollution. We now have clause 9(b) which is another piece of legislation giving control over the environment. The provinces have regulations. The municipalities have regulations. The federal government has a multitude of acts overlapping one with another, of which the general public, and certainly the fishermen, have no adequate knowledge. On top of all this, the government now proposes clause 9(b) further to control the environment. I say it is superfluous in view of all the other legislation having to do with the environment which is presently in place.

Let us put these things under one canopy, Mr. Speaker. Let us not have them spread around. We do have spreaders for certain items used on the farm, and it looks to me as if one of those must have passed through the Department of the Environment when the department was framing control of the environment legislation, because they have sure spread it all over the statutes of this country to an extent that nobody could be expected totally to understand. If offences are created by this legislation, a schedule of penalties should be appended to the act. We are going to be pretty much subject to regulation, with the exception of one offence involving a very minor fine.