

will no doubt be difficult if not impossible to benefit from this legislation this year, because the summer season has already begun. In spite of that fact, I must say that the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment (Mr. LeBlanc) will give rise to many hopes with that bill, since it will enable individuals and corporations to take advantage of the financial and technical assistance of the department.

In my constituency, Marina régionale de Rimouski Inc. have been trying for several years to obtain assistance to build a marina in the port of Rimouski on a location recognized as being propitious to such an operation while not hindering any traffic of heavy tonnage. Environment Canada did receive a report from that organization requesting financial assistance to carry out its project. It now has 90 members waiting for the assistance of the federal department in this project.

Rimouski has a strategic position: it is located on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, 180 miles east of Quebec City and 345 miles northeast of Montreal. The average width of the river within the quadrilateral formed by Rivière-du-Loup and Matane on the south shore and Godbout and Tadoussac on the north shore, of which Rimouski is the centre on the south shore, is about 30 to 40 miles. With the variety of services it provides, Rimouski could easily become the main centre for sailing and recreational activities in the eastern part of Quebec, an important halt for tourists coming from the Saguenay area, Quebec City, Montreal, the Richelieu Valley and the United States, and an open gate on ocean navigation for travellers heading for the Gaspé Peninsula, Anticosti Island and the Magdalen Islands. Rimouski is proud of the stretch of water it offers and conscious of its exceptional position as we can see by the number of boat owners, maritime and nautical sport clubs as well as the number of oceanologic institutions its harbours.

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Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out in passing all the bodies interested in the development of Rimouski harbour. The town of Rimouski has its own school of maritime navigation affiliated with the college course of the education department. It also owns an oceanographic research centre affiliated with the University of Quebec at Rimouski; the group GIROQ, a provincial body for oceanographic research; a squadron of the Canadian Power Squadrons made up of 40 members, which for several years has been giving courses in maritime navigation and nautical safety; a sailing club of 125 members whose aim is to promote sailing and teach its technique. The sailing club is also greatly responsible for the only off-shore sailing regatta in the province of Quebec; this regatta is supported by the Fédération de la voile du Québec and the winner is awarded the Lieutenant-Governor's trophy. Rimouski also has a 100-member scuba-diving club and 10 boats from 20 to 45 feet long, a nautical club with 300 members and 100 yachts 12 to 20 feet long.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if you are aware of that, but a few years ago, the highway department built a road that stretches about three miles along the shore of the St. Lawrence

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River. A retaining wall was also erected. Unfortunately that wall has the effect of breaking the waves which now causes a lot of damage to pleasure boats and even bigger ships during storms. I would also like to mention damages caused in recent years since the construction of the retaining wall. Damages have been caused to boats and their owners since 1972, the year when the retaining wall of Highway 132 was built. This list is not exhaustive and is only given to indicate the urgency of the situation: a 30-foot whaler sank; a visitor boat from the United States a 35-foot sloop, and a 40-foot school-ship from Montreal were damaged. More than twenty ships of all sizes, local and visitor, suffered various damages.

The summer of 1974 was particularly fertile in unfortunate events: one wrist fractured, one rudder broken, two stem galleries wrung, one chain plate torn off with part of the deck, one stay tightener twisted and one mast broken in three parts. Unfortunately, to this list we should add long hours of watching, smashed fences, gunwale rails ripped off and countless damages to fibre-glass hulls or painted surfaces.

Mr. Speaker, for all those reasons and many more to which we will come back during another debate, we believe it is at least abnormal if not unjust that Rimouski could not benefit from the necessary facilities to protect small crafts and visiting boats. Rimouski residents can only offer the federal harbour in Rimouski East to local sportsmen for the protection of their craft. Moreover, this relative security is granted to them only through simple and gracious permission of port authorities and it can be removed at any time because it is not part of a contractual negotiation as such. Although partial, the protection owners enjoyed before was acceptable. As I said earlier, the construction of a retaining wall is required for Highway 132 in front of the Rimouski-East wharf, and it has transformed this relative security into a real danger. This retaining wall is in fact dangerous and bounces the waves formed by the north and northeast winds directly back into the harbour where the boats are berthed. Those waves, with the Bernoulli phenomenon caused by the bottleneck shape of the wharf, are quite amplified and cause really disastrous and highly dangerous situations, especially since the foreign visitor, knowing nothing of the above mentioned phenomenon, is deluded by the apparent security of this haven.

This situation is not extraordinary, as it could be easily believed, and it is not necessarily accompanying unusually bad weather. Every time the wind blows from the north-northeast or east, and that the tide is rising, the worst can be expected and the worst usually happens. When referring to serious works in meteorology for the Rimouski area concerning prevalent winds for normal navigation, and reading in regard the data of the 1975 tide tables, if we synthesize those parameters even summarily, there is no point in mentioning the apprehension felt by vacationers concerning the opening of the next navigation season. If we add to all this the narrowness of this harbour where over 39 local boats were berthing last year, most of them in double, this year there will be some 15 additional boats. The situation is not only dangerous but catastrophic and it becomes intolerable.