

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

tional harbours in Canada, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, I earlier mentioned my concern about wharfage. In the interim I have had an opportunity to look into the subject a little deeper, and there are some matters I should like to put on the record.

The first is an exchange between myself and the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment (Mr. LeBlanc) which took place at the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry on May 30, 1975, when I put the following question:

... let us resolve this wharfage business. Let us wipe it out and start over ...

And the minister replied:

I will say amen to that.

Every member present at that committee meeting was under the impression that the minister had given his approval to the principle of eliminating wharfage as a fee against fishermen and other boat owners.

On May 27, 1975, a group of fishermen from the Fundy coast of New Brunswick appeared before the committee and the subject of wharfage came up again. I questioned Mr. Andrew Matthews, who was appearing for the second time, as follows:

MR. MCCAIN: When you were here before the subject of wharfage was brought up. Has this problem been corrected for you?

MR. A. MATTHEWS: No, it has not. People are still getting wharfage bills and summonses. There are some fees and they will not give them foreign clearance.

MR. MCCAIN: What is your principal complaint about this wharfage?

MR. A. MATTHEWS: I cannot see that it is any good. It is this way: we will go into the wharf and tie up. I have a 42 foot boat and my neighbour has a 40 foot boat. I will have to pay wharfage and he will go scot-free but we are both taking up the same space at the wharf. If it is compulsory for one man to pay wharfage, regardless of the size of his boat it should be compulsory for everyone.

The subject was also raised in committee on March 13, 1975, by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Anderson), when he put the following question:

I have a second question, Mr. Chairman. Has your department made any investigation into the charging of fees for the use of federal small-craft harbours when there is no wharfman on duty due to the size of the wharf?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reid, that is yours.

MR. REID: Mr. Chairman, in the new act which we hope to introduce very shortly, we have examined this whole area of user charges and the wharfing system. We hope to be able to introduce a system of fees whereby a fisherman, or even the recreational boating public using federal facilities, will pay one fee a year which will give them the opportunity to dock at federal government facilities, so that it will no longer be the duty of the wharfing to collect the fees from people as they are docking at federal government facilities.

Perhaps it would be wrong of me to ask if the Minister of Fisheries has any idea of the number of boats that go in and out of certain of those small craft facilities in a day, or a week, or even a season.

● (2010)

Is the government prepared to pay to the person responsible for collecting wharfage a proper amount of money, and so induce him to exercise surveillance over the port or harbour throughout the year, in order to assure its equitable use? Or, is it the government's policy to continue the patronage system, of

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

appointing friends to collect money from those from whom they wish to collect? I raise one more question.

The question I placed on the order paper on November 17 asked if there is a standard wharfage structure in eastern Canada. I was always under the impression eastern Canada included the five eastern provinces, in all of which there are opportunities for fishing and fish industries. If there is a wharfage structure in the province of Quebec, it is not listed in the answer. If fees were collected, they were not listed. If there is a charge system in the Quebec area of eastern Canada, that is not listed. I presume all this may be due to an oversight. But if it was not an oversight, I want the government to explain why my question was not answered adequately.

In the main, the present wharfage system is obnoxious and improperly managed. I see no indication in this bill that this will change. Apparently it will be perpetuated. That will be a perpetuation of wrong-doing.

Virtually the longest clause of Bill C-7 deals with the government's regulation making powers. It permits the government to make regulations with respect to the classification of harbours, payment of wharfage fees, penalties, and pollution. Subparagraph (d) of Clause 9 says that the Governor in Council may make regulations "not inconsistent with any other act of parliament or regulations made thereunder, for the control of pollution at any scheduled harbour."

There are already three acts in place on the statute books concerning small harbour facilities. Now a fourth statute is to be added. That this bill does not specify more clearly the minister's responsibility concerning non-fishing boats, pleasure craft and other boats is improper. It gives the harbour authorities no authority to reserve particular fishing facility for fishing boats. It will not resolve fishermen's complaints that pleasure craft using a harbour interfere with the fishermen's use of the harbour.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but must inform him that his allotted time has expired. He may continue if he has unanimous consent. Has the hon. member unanimous consent to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. McCain: Mr. Speaker, I shall be brief. I appreciate the generosity of hon. members. It is imperative to maintain small pleasure craft harbours along the coast. It is also imperative for the government to consider the tourist oriented potential of these harbours, a potential relating to the arrival and departure of small boats. Consequently proper facilities should be provided.

[Translation]

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to discuss Bill C-7 respecting the administration and development of certain fishing and recreational harbours in Canada. I do not intend to linger on that legislation, except to say that it is somewhat late this year. Indeed, it