

velocity in excess of 100 miles per hour, and it combined with high tides to give the coast a lashing the like of which has never been known before in that area.

All three counties of Shelburne, Yarmouth and Digby suffered severe storm damage. The vastness of the territory covered by these three counties makes it most difficult to arrive at an estimate of the damage with any degree of accuracy. In circumstances such as these one has to rely on the local press, and one of the local weeklies, *Le Petit Courrier*, in its issue of February 5, 1976, claims that the losses created by the storm will probably amount to \$4 million.

Today I called the editor of this paper to learn that officials of the provincial Department of Fisheries estimate the loss to fishermen and the related industries to be in the area of \$20 million. Tonight I read in the *Ottawa Journal*, datelined Halifax, as follows:

Initial figures indicate \$40 million to \$50 million damage has been reported by fishermen in southwestern Nova Scotia as a result of a February 2 storm with winds gusting to more than 100 miles an hour. Fisheries Minister A. M. Cameron said Monday. Mr. Cameron said the final total for damaged equipment probably will be high enough to involve federal government assistance. He said he expects claims for these items to amount to several million dollars.

I suspect, honourable senators, that whatever the right figure turns out to be, it will be a heavy one. The damage runs the gamut from that of minor proportions, such as the uplifting of rooftops, the toppling of chimneys, the breaking of windows, et cetera, to that of major proportions, such as the uprooting of trees and utility poles, the demolition of mobile homes and other small buildings, the sinking of fishing vessels, and the destruction of wharves with their related buildings and equipment.

● (2030)

The hardest hit of all were the fishermen and the fishing and marine industries. In the town of Yarmouth, the sea was forcefully driven way beyond the high tide mark covering a long stretch of its Water Street. Abetted by the hurricane force wind, the sea battered to ruin many of the wharves which line the edge of the street, and along with that it took the boats which were tied up to them. Such was the fate of many scallop draggers, herring seiners and smaller lobster boats in Yarmouth, the Tusket Islands and the surrounding areas as well as in many other communities in Shelburne and Digby counties.

Perhaps I should explain that this storm struck at a point in winter when many of the lobstermen, out of respect for the rigours of the winter, traditionally pull their traps out of the water and stack them up neatly on the shore—and, wherever possible, in the interest of practicality, on wharves, some of which are their own property. After the storm, in some cases both the traps and the wharf disappeared. One wharf in particular on Turpentine Island is said to have contained 1,000 such traps at a value of between \$20 and \$30 apiece. This is one of the many examples of the gravity of the damage suffered by hundreds of fishermen. One bright note in this whole story is that there was no loss of life.

[Senator Côtteau.]

Honourable senators, I will not prolong my description of the storm. I would simply say that the Government of Nova Scotia has shown an immediate and warm response to the state of emergency which followed the storm in my home area. It is my belief that a program for the relief of those afflicted will be properly initiated by the province. I know that the local M.P., Miss Coline Campbell, is very much concerned about this matter and that she is doing her utmost to bring some relief to the area.

My plea at this time is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator Perrault, to take note of the situation brought about by the recent storm in my area and in other parts of the Atlantic provinces, and to lend a sympathetic ear to any request for federal assistance in the promotion of a relief program to help those whose possessions have been so tragically destroyed.

Senator Perrault: I know that all honourable senators appreciate the account given us by Senator Côtteau with respect to the devastating storm in his area. I should like to take this opportunity to assure him on behalf of the government that should an official request for assistance be forwarded to the government, sympathetic consideration will be given to it.

WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION BILL

THIRD READING

Senator McDonald moved third reading of Bill C-41, respecting the stabilization of net proceeds from the production and sale of western grain and to amend certain statutes in consequence thereof.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, is it your pleasure to adopt the motion?

Senator Paterson: Honourable senators, may I have the opportunity to ask Senator McDonald a question before the final question is put? I should like to know if the idea behind this piece of legislation is to perpetuate the price of a loaf of bread at 60 cents or more? I ask this in view of the fact that there are 22 million consumers in Canada, half of them women and children, and many people are finding great difficulty in trying to supply their families with bread at 60 cents a loaf.

Senator McDonald: Honourable senators, this piece of legislation has nothing to do with the price of bread. It has no relationship whatsoever, in that all that this bill provides for is a levelling of farm income over a period of years. This piece of legislation does not mean that wheat will have any given price, but that the average return to the farmers will be stabilized over a period of years, thus removing the humps and hollows in returns from grain production in Western Canada. The federal government will put into the western grain stabilization account \$2 for every \$1 contributed by the farmers. It certainly has nothing to do with the price of grain.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL, 1975

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Wednesday, February 11, the debate on the motion of Senator Langlois for the second