

Canada Shipping Act

be given the opportunity to stand up and try to defend this piece of legislation. I would ask him to extend the courtesy to other Members in the House of listening and sobering up.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Forrestall: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I invite the Hon. Member to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I also ask the Hon. Member to withdraw his last words.

Mr. Nunziata: Yes, I will withdraw the reference I made. It is regrettable that the Member provoked me into making that comment, but I will withdraw it. I ask that the Member withdraw his continual interruptions with points of order which, in effect, are not points of order.

As I was saying, one should question the philosophy behind this particular amendment with regard to user pay. If that philosophy were extended throughout the Government in general, various sectors of society would be asked to pay for the services which are provided for the exclusive use of that sector of society. It is tantamount to asking motorists to pay for all costs associated with the construction and maintenance of roadways. It is tantamount to requiring senior citizens alone to pay for the cost of services for them. It is tantamount to making young people solely responsible for the cost of education. That is not the basis of our society today. We have developed to the point where it is recognized that taxpayers in general should pay for certain important services which affect the national interest. I submit that the Canadian Coast Guard serves the national interest. It is there to provide a certain level of safety to the boating public.

• (1720)

You have indicated that I have a few minutes to go, Mr. Speaker, so I would like to make one or two other points with respect to Clause 4. I would like to ask the Government rhetorically whether it considered the economic impact of Clause 4. It would appear from the committee minutes and the language used in the drafting of the legislation that it has not. I am speaking specifically of communities in Atlantic Canada, British Columbia and elsewhere which rely very heavily on the Canadian Coast Guard. It appears that the Government has not considered the impact on these communities of being forced to bear the cost of the Canadian Coast Guard which is currently some \$824 million annually. I ask that the Government reconsider the disservice this clause will do to those communities.

An amendment has been suggested by the NDP. The Liberal Party in general opposes the philosophy and principle of user fees.

Mr. Althouse: Oh, oh!

Mr. Forrestall: Tell that to Otto Lang.

Mr. Nunziata: The amendment put forward by the NDP would require that the effect of Clause 4 be reviewed every two years. We, of course, would prefer the clause not to exist at all, and the *status quo* maintained concerning the Canadian Coast Guard. However, if the Government recognizes the wisdom of this amendment, it will reduce the harsh effect of Clause 4 and give parliamentarians the opportunity to assess that harmful effect. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this amendment.

Mr. Forrestall: You can review it regularly in the standing committee right now.

Mr. Morrissey Johnson (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak very briefly regarding this amendment to Clause 4. I think it is totally unnecessary. With the implementation of parliamentary reform and the setting up of legislative committees, I thought each Member had the opportunity to express his or her views on a given Bill and its amendments. That is certainly true in this case. Government and opposition Members voiced their concerns about Clause 4. The reason we did so is the uncertainty over what Clause 4 will mean concerning charges applied to ship owners and shipping companies. However, when he appeared before the committee, the Minister agreed that no charges would be imposed for at least a year, and that public notice of any charges to be imposed would be given 90 days prior to their taking effect. In that way, those people opposed to the charges would have an opportunity to voice their concerns.

This motion would have no serious effect on the Department. The Standing Committee on Transport can now review this matter at any time during normal program review or on the special request of some of its members. Therefore, I do not see the point in this amendment at all. I do not believe there is any serious objection to a review by the standing committee two years after the Bill comes into effect. However, a routine review every two years thereafter is completely unnecessary. The committee could review the Coast Guard cost recovery program whenever it deemed it prudent to do so. If this amendment is adopted, it would in fact remove the legislative requirement to re-publish regulations revising charges under this clause of the Bill.

I believe the Hon. Member who introduced this amendment did so in order to have a forum from which to attack the Government on other issues. Most of the debate I have heard today on this issue is not so much on the proposed amendment but on Clause 4 itself. Everyone in the legislative committee had an opportunity to express his or her views on Clause 4. I thought the legislative committee did a very good job in getting various changes agreed to during the clause by clause study. While it is perhaps not perfect, it is a heck of a lot better than what we have had for a good many years. It has been a long, long time coming.

Having been involved in shipping all my life prior to coming to this Chamber in 1984, I am quite aware of what the Canada Shipping Act means. I certainly have sympathy for the people