

C-7 also mentioned that recreational boating programs will emphasize joint planning and co-operation with the provinces.

Some hon. members opposite have expressed concern that expenditures on recreational harbours might be made at the expense of our fishermen. An examination of the record shows that since the transfer of responsibility for small craft harbours to the Department of Fisheries and the Environment, priority has consistently been given to commercial fisheries rather than to recreational boating in the way of wharves and facilities. This has been the policy of my minister, and when he led off this debate he made it clear that that will continue to be the emphasis. As his parliamentary secretary and as a member from Ontario I should say, however, that I am particularly aware of the concern of those hon. members who do not come from wealthy ridings and who are very concerned about the provision of facilities for pleasure craft harbours in Ontario and, to some degree, in B.C. as well.

My minister has made it clear that his priority must be operational harbours to assist Canadians in the fisheries business. Pleasure craft harbours are where a viable operation can be developed in the private sector. Pleasure craft harbours must also be encouraged. However, I do want to note that my minister and his officials are aware of the concern of hon. members who are worried about attention not being given to pleasure craft harbours, but again his emphasis must be where the greatest deprivation and the greatest need exists, and that is with our working fishermen.

One of the speakers earlier today expressed concern about just how figures are arrived at and what moneys are put toward the development of small craft harbours. I believe it was the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan). I think he suggested that there might be—if not so much today, in yesteryear—favouritism according to votes and that this was based on the number of votes landed, as he put it. He said sometimes it was argued that it was based on the landed value of fish. I simply want to point out that the landed value of fish is only one of many factors considered in the allocation of funds. The department also considers the state and number of wharves in a particular area, the number and size of fishing vessels in that area, the harbours, the volume of landings and the potential for the future of the resource in each location.

Social and community factors are also given due consideration. It is not as easy or as simple as the hon. member would make it. I believe if we were to break it down according to members and political parties, we might be led to believe that the allocations are based on the number of votes garnered by opposition parties and not by us, because in fact some of the opposition parties do very well compared with our members in the maritime regions.

I should also mention that our marina assistance policy is under review in light of Bill C-7, and we will be making some changes. The hon. member for South Shore asks why we should spend money on this type of project and receive no direct return from the developer on the federal contribution. The department is presently examining this matter and would welcome suggestions from the committee.

Fishing and Recreational Harbours

Several hon. members opposite have expressed concern that under this bill the government intends to appoint zone managers. Nowhere in the bill is there a reference to zone managers, nor do we presently have plans to establish this type of management. I am sure that hon. members can recall complaints about disarray, neglect and unsupervised wharves, and they will therefore agree that a modest degree of proper wharf supervision is essential. That is what this bill is all about. It would bring to order things which have grown to disorder over the years. This is what the bill proposes to introduce, and the minister looks forward to more discussion of it in detail in the committee.

There has been a misstatement of fact which should be corrected for the record. It relates to Clause 25(2) and a fine of \$50. That is a maximum and not a minimum fine, as has been alleged by the hon. member for South Shore. Perhaps the wording of this clause is not too clear, with all respect to that hon. member, in which case we might consider an appropriate revision in committee.

I know that some hon. members on both sides of the House who have been concerned about this particular legislation are concerned that at this point in time when there is an awful lot of economic duress, especially in our maritime areas, and particularly on the east coast, that the introduction of a fee structure such as that proposed in this bill might be very unfair and detrimental to our fisheries workers. The minister has asked me to assure those hon. members that he realizes this is a difficult time, and he assures them he will go very cautiously in this matter. He looks forward to hearing from them on this matter in the committee.

There are some other minor points which hon. members have raised and which will be discussed in the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill. I am sorry if I was a little angry and strident at the beginning. I want to close by saying that there have been contributions from both sides of this House by thoughtful members who are knowledgeable about the problem. I am sure we will have the best possible legislation when it comes back to the House after going to the committee.

● (2220)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment (Mr. Fleming) accept a question from the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse)?

Mr. Fleming: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Crouse: The hon. parliamentary secretary referred to a comment I made when addressing the House on this bill on December 10 to the effect that the minister can build recreational harbours wherever he chooses, as being somewhat misleading. I should like to ask the hon. member if my interpretation of Clause 5(1) is incorrect. The clause reads as follows:

5. (1) The Minister may undertake projects for the acquisition, development, construction, improvement or repair of any scheduled harbour or any fishing or recreational harbour to which this Act applies.