

Mr. WINCH: Of course I have a keen interest in British Columbia.

Mr. SIM: It is essentially a cooperative effort on our part with the provincial authorities. It is convenient for them to have our men do it, and so far we have acquiesced in its being done.

Mr. WINCH: The main point of complaint was in the Okanagan valley.

Mr. SIM: I do recall one incident last year where the wife of a former collector had a stand somewhere adjacent to the customs office and she took exception I think to our office collecting the fee.

Mr. WINCH: Very, very violent, or I should say strenuous, objection.

Mr. SIM: I do not recall she made any objection as long as her husband was the collector of customs, but I think when he retired from office she had a different view.

Mr. WINCH: What is the policy there?

Mr. SIM: The policy, practicably, is one of cooperating with the provincial governments of whatever political persuasion. I do not like to take on too much of this work, but this is something which has been done for British Columbia for a great many years and we have been simply continuing the practice. I have misgivings about it in this respect; it might result in an officer at "X" salary getting perhaps a windfall of an unknown amount.

While we do not object to our officers getting extra money, it seems desirable in the interests of unification and standardization of remuneration of our officers to avoid this if possible. We have given some consideration to perhaps turning this revenue into the general revenue which might, as a policy, take care of the objections which have been registered, because it could scarcely be argued that the official would be assiduous in directing business towards himself if there was nothing in it for him. We are giving consideration to that very point.

Mr. WINCH: I could understand the broad policy where there did not happen to be a small business adjacent to the point of entry, but although it may sound strange to some who do not understand me or understand my party, I am fighting for the small businessman who is close by. I think it should be considered under those circumstances.

Mr. BENEDICKSON: I wish to pose a little problem here which is something on which the deputy minister and I have not seen eye to eye, although that very seldom occurs.

I would like to have some expression of opinion from my colleagues. There is nothing political in this. There may be quite a number of other members who have in their constituencies, or nearby, international bridges. I assume that those international bridges, like the one we have between the International Falls and Fort Frances, are manned twenty-four hours of the day. I am interested because we are getting another international bridge in the near future between Rainy River and Beaudette, Minnesota.

There is a practice in the department to assess a special charge if importations are made beyond the normal hours of business in the five-day week, and if someone is making a commercial import on a Saturday or a Sunday he is assessed a special fee of \$5. I can see the fairness of that in respect of a port which is normally open only during the day in business hours and is closed on Saturday and on Sunday. I have a couple of that type of port and have no complaint with the special service fee in that respect.

I can think of a city like Winnipeg where an officer is required to come down on a Saturday or a Sunday to make an assessment and it is quite legitimate to charge a special fee for that service beyond the five-day week. But at an international bridge such as one which is manned by a staff 24