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## Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

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EVIDENCE

**Thursday, April 3, 2008**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Fabian Manning**

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Thursday, April 3, 2008

• (0910)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Fabian Manning (Avalon, CPC)):** I call the meeting to order.

I apologize for my lateness. I was on a telephone call to Newfoundland. I sent word that I'd be a few minutes late, but Mr. Matthews didn't jump at the challenge.

**A voice:** It was those carrier pigeons you used.

**The Chair:** He'll jump to it at 10 o'clock; I have to leave early.

I want to welcome everybody here, and welcome our witnesses. My understanding is that each witness has a few opening remarks they would like to make. The order I have in front of me is that Ms. Natalie Bull will be going first. Ms. Bull represents the Heritage Canada Foundation. Following Ms. Bull will be Barry MacDonald, who's the president of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society. Following Barry will be Peter Noreau, vice-president...and I'll be honest with you, sir, I'm not going to try the rest of it, so I'll let you explain your organization when you get the opportunity to speak. And then we have Mr. David Bradley, who is the chair of the Association of Heritage Industries of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Welcome, everybody. As you're fully aware, we started a process last week in regard to Bill S-215. We're delighted that you took the time to join us here today. Following your opening remarks, the floor will be open for questions from our members to ask you anything they might be interested in.

Ms. Bull, the floor is yours.

**Mrs. Natalie Bull (Executive Director, Heritage Canada Foundation):** Thank you very much.

Mr. Chair, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of Bill S-215, an act to protect heritage lighthouses.

First I'll say a few words about the Heritage Canada Foundation. We are an independent charitable organization with a public mandate to promote the rehabilitation and sustainable reuse of Canada's built heritage.

I'd like to commend the many Members of Parliament, senators, organizations, and citizens who've worked tirelessly toward making protection for lighthouses a reality. In particular, I'd like to recognize the late Senator Forrestall, Senator Carney, Senator Murray, and members of Parliament Larry Miller, Gerald Keddy, and Peter Stoffer, among many others who've worked to make this a reality.

I think we can all agree on the landmark status many lighthouses have in their communities. Beyond their role as landmarks and icons, lighthouses have undeniable economic value. They are used extensively in marketing so many Canadian places as tourist destinations, and many are significant destinations in and of themselves. Today I'd like to emphasize why Bill S-215 is needed by clarifying how heritage conservation is regulated and legislated in this country. I think it would provide a useful context. I'd also like to share an example from a parallel universe.

All provincial and territorial jurisdictions, and by delegated authority all municipal governments in Canada, have binding heritage statutes and related legal measures they can use to protect heritage places. However, federal historic places—think of the post offices, the Government of Canada buildings and armouries in your own ridings, for example—have no such protection. This is an issue that needs to be addressed. Canada is the only G-8 nation without such protection for its own buildings. Indeed, we're a full 40 years behind the United States in establishing a national heritage act.

Since 1987 the federal government of Canada has dealt with heritage through the federal heritage buildings policy, but this policy framework is insufficient. Indeed, in November 2003 the Auditor General of Canada reported that built heritage under federal control “will be lost to future generations unless action to protect it is taken soon”.

The Auditor General's audit revealed a lack of accountability for heritage protection and called for strengthening the federal legal framework to protect heritage property. In the 1980s this lack of legal protection and lack of accountability reached a crisis point for a particular type of endangered federal heritage building: historic railway stations. Some were being dramatically altered to accommodate changes in railway technology, others were declared redundant and left to deteriorate, and too many were bulldozed into landfill sites while horrified citizens protested. Canadians discovered that no heritage railway station had any form of protection and that they had no voice in determining the future of these iconic structures. Even railway stations that had already been declared national historic sites by the Government of Canada had no legal protection.

Canadians protested, and the government responded with the introduction of the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act. An exact parallel now exists with heritage lighthouses. Like railway stations, they are at risk of becoming an endangered species. New technology and other forces have made many of them redundant, and their federal custodian does not have a heritage conservation mandate. Lighthouses are a special class of heritage facing unusual pressures, and there is a pressing need to get protection in place. Note that even in the U.S., where there is a national heritage act to protect historic places, the legislation that applies for heritage lighthouses exists as a separate amendment, and it's comparable to Bill S-215. So proceeding with Bill S-215 now, without further delay, is entirely appropriate and absolutely essential.

What are the strengths of Bill S-215? It's modelled on the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act, and it basically provides a systematic and legally binding mechanism for the recognition, protection, maintenance, and potential disposal of heritage lighthouses. One of the key deficiencies of current federal heritage policy is that citizens are not consulted when a lighthouse is altered, transferred, or destroyed. This act would engage communities in the protection of their historic places by putting a clear process in place, and it would increase accountability by providing opportunities for public scrutiny.

Briefly, Bill S-215 provides a means for evaluating lighthouses and identifying those worthy of designation as heritage lighthouses. So it's not about all of them; it's about the special ones. It provides an opportunity for public consultation before alterations are made to those designated lighthouses. It requires public notice before transfer, sale, or demolition. It requires that a designated heritage lighthouse be reasonably maintained. And it facilitates ongoing protection and ensures use for a public purpose when heritage lighthouses are transferred out of federal ownership.

● (0915)

These measures will increase the chances of long-term protection for designated lighthouses, whether they stay in the federal inventory or whether they are transferred to other owners.

The amendments under discussion to better define the scope of the act—namely, the change to related buildings rather than related structures—should not deter this committee from supporting this bill and sending it back to the House for third reading.

In closing, thank you all very much for your work in refining this bill. Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the discussion, and godspeed in your deliberations.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Bull.

Mr. MacDonald.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald (President, Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to speak to this committee on Bill S-215, which seeks to protect our heritage lighthouses.

It's been a long road since the first meeting of the lighthouse protection act committee was held in Halifax in early 1999. In February of 2000 the late Senator Michael Forrestall met with our

committee and presented us with the first draft of what was to be Bill S-21.

I've been involved in lighthouse preservation for the past 12 years, and have served as president of the Nova Scotia Lighthouse Preservation Society for the past five years. During this time I've had the pleasure of giving lighthouse talks in the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and British Columbia. I have been consistently impressed with the positive response I have received. I've seen evidence of the strong bond that exists between people in these communities and the lighthouses that have served them and their forefathers.

Lighthouses are given almost a spiritual value by people in these maritime communities and rate in importance with the church. To verify the spiritual connection we have only to look back in history to see that administration of early aids to navigation along the St. Lawrence River was entrusted to the Jesuits and Trinity House.

People in these communities all across Canada have become increasingly concerned with the welfare of these very special structures. I could give you many stories of fundraising efforts involving bake sales, bingos, etc., ideas that money-strapped community groups come up with to save and protect a fixture in their community that they hold dear—their lighthouse.

I cannot say enough for the volunteer effort put forth by people across the country, an effort that I feel should be taken into account by our lawmakers as they consider this legislation. Bill S-215 will send a strong message of acknowledgement and added incentive to these hard-working Canadians.

Lighthouse preservation is alive and well all across this country, but it's not new. I'd like to give you one very early example. In 1967 the Puntney family of Morson, Ontario, located in the Lake of the Woods region of western Ontario, rescued the obsolete Tomahawk Island lighthouse, towing it across the ice and relocating it on their property. Since that time, the Puntney family has carefully maintained this lighthouse and proudly shows it off to anyone who cares to visit.

This is only one example of early efforts to preserve these maritime beacons. And efforts at lighthouse preservation continue on a larger scale today, with groups located in almost all provinces with lighthouses on their shores.

There are many examples of success stories, and I would like to talk about a few in the Maritimes. The Cape Forchu lighthouse in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, was the first lighthouse in Canada passed over under what we now know as the DFO divestiture program. This project was a cooperative effort involving the Friends of the Yarmouth Light, a not-for-profit community group, the Town of Yarmouth, and the Province of Nova Scotia. This transfer took place in 2000 and this community group is still alive and well and greets thousands of tourists in the town of Yarmouth each year.

A pioneering effort began in Prince Edward Island in 1984 with the lease of the West Point lighthouse. A well-organized development plan saw ten rooms, a full-menu restaurant, and a gift shop in place by 1987. A real success story, this lighthouse has consistently employed 25 local people and is a major tourism destination on Prince Edward Island.

Lastly, in the Province of New Brunswick the award-winning Cape Enrage Interpretative Centre welcomes over 40,000 visitors per year to this rugged Fundy shore location. This non-profit group generates annual revenues of \$350,000 and has a payroll of \$120,000, employing approximately 20 students. This dynamic group has been in business since 1993 and hasn't looked back.

These are but a few examples of the alternative uses that volunteer groups have found for their lighthouses.

We must recognize and protect the rich architecture that is present in our lighthouses across this country, from the British influence seen in lighthouses across Newfoundland and Labrador, to the majestic "imperial towers" of the Great lakes, Quebec, and British Columbia, to the work of the famous Canadian architect, Colonel William P. Anderson, in light towers such as Pointe-au-Père in Quebec, and Estevan Point in B.C., to name only two. And of course we cannot forget the humble pepper-shaker-style wooden lighthouse that was developed in Canada and still dots our shores to this day. Few countries can lay claim to such an eclectic mix of lighthouse architecture.

Since the formation of the World Lighthouse Society in 2004, many articles have been written by that society about our rich lighthouse history and our attempts at securing federal legislation. Passage of Bill S-215 will send a strong message to our friends around the world that we take our lighthouse heritage very seriously.

● (0920)

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who has worked to get us to where we are today. We all remember the late Senator Michael Forrestall, who was the first one to come to Nova Scotia and work with us, and Senator Pat Carney, who's put a great effort into this act over the past several years, as well as Senator Lowell Murray. I'd like to thank also the local MP Gerald Keddy, from Nova Scotia, who's put a lot into this bill, as well as MP Larry Miller, who has currently introduced it. And last but not least is Peter Stoffer, from Nova Scotia, who has consistently supported our efforts with this lighthouse legislation.

Few pieces of legislation have ever seen this many attempts, and I think this speaks volumes for the tenacity of those involved and for the high regard in which lighthouses are held in this country. I join with Larry Miller in saying let's make this seven times lucky.

Thank you for your time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. MacDonald.

Mr. Noreau.

**Mr. Peter Noreau (Vice-President, Corporation des gestionnaires de phares de l'estuaire et du golfe du Saint-Laurent):** Good morning, Mr. Chair.

Good morning to everyone.

I'm representing the *Corporation des gestionnaires de phares de l'estuaire et du golfe du Saint-Laurent*, which means, in English, the corporation that is taking care of the 43 lighthouses on the St. Lawrence River within the boundaries of Quebec.

I'm not going to repeat everything that's been said so far this morning. I'm so amazed to see that this bill is getting to be put in place eventually—and shortly, I was told. It's going to be quite an issue, because, in my words, I think we need our people who are in authority to give us some guidelines as to where we're going with the protection of our lighthouses.

As a quick example, in *L'Actualité* of August 2000—it's a French general magazine—it stated that 3% of the lighthouses are preserved in Canada, 77% in the United States, and 100% in Europe. I've been invited to France several times to visit with some of those people. What I'm trying to say is that once the bill is in place and we get things organized legally, etc., I'm just going to screech out and say we need help financially to keep those buildings.

I'm not preaching only for my case. We're working hard to preserve these lighthouses on the St. Lawrence. I'm talking about my area. Personally, I've put in a little over \$270,000 to save one lighthouse. That's what I decided in my life; I thought it was that important. It dates from 1894; it's extremely isolated, and blah, blah, blah. There were tons of garbage on that. I have pictures to show. The work I had to do to get this lighthouse back in shape is just incredible. Now it's in immaculate condition.

So these guidelines that are coming down the road ahead of us, I'm quite impressed by that. Finally—I'm saying finally—we're getting something. You just wouldn't believe in the U.K. and Ireland and in France the support they get from their governments over there. It's just amazing. I'm an old skipper with Air Canada; I just retired a few months ago. I was there 37 years and 11 months, so I had a chance to travel quite a bit, and I met all kinds of people. I got involved in the lighthouse business, and it's just amazing.

So we need your guidelines from a point of view of law, structures, etc., but I'm just here to scream for help. We need a few dollars out there to get our lighthouses on the go.

Thank you very much. That's all I had to say.

● (0925)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Noreau. I think you got your point across loud and clear.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** I'm an old Frenchman, but my mom was Irish, you see, so maybe the blood circulates differently.

**The Chair:** Irish blood certainly circulates differently. I know all about that.

Last, but by no means least, from Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Bradley.

**Mr. David Bradley (Chair, Association of Heritage Industries of Newfoundland and Labrador):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to speak to the committee on this issue.

I see a lot of familiar faces from my province around the table, and I guess that's a testament to the importance of fisheries matters to the province. Lighthouses may seem to be relatively less important compared to some of the major issues, but still it's an issue in which a lot of people are interested, and it's something that has to be addressed.

The Association of Heritage Industries, which I represent here today, is an umbrella group of volunteer provincial heritage organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador. The organizations that make up AHI include those with a direct interest or mandate in the protection of built heritage.

Much has been done at the provincial level. Several lighthouses have been preserved by either the provincial government or volunteer heritage groups. In the first half of this decade, the Lighthouse Society of Newfoundland and Labrador worked diligently for the preservation of lighthouses in the province. We also acknowledge that since 2000, coast guard officials in the province have undertaken their own research initiatives to document the knowledge and history of lighthouses. We support these efforts and we support this bill.

Canada's cultural heritage is vital to our identity and sense of place. The built heritage is the most vivid physical representation of that cultural heritage, and is therefore worthy of preservation in all its forms. As with railway stations, lighthouses have a special significance to Canadians. They are iconic structures. Many have significant architecture. But their importance stems more from their role in Canadian history. Often standing in relative isolation on islands or headlands, they have been the first evidence of Canadian culture encountered by generations of immigrants to this country. Many lighthouses have been guiding fishermen and mariners to port since the age of sail, and they stand as a testament to the tragedies throughout history that have befallen thousands of Canadian fishermen and mariners who, due to harsh conditions of climate, coast, and sea, were unable to bring their vessels to port.

How then will Bill S-215 help protect these historic structures? It will not guarantee that every historic lighthouse in Canada has a secure future. However, if passed, the bill will ensure that lighthouses are subjected to a formal process to determine their value for designation and protection. It would compel the government to assess lighthouses in its inventory and to consider which should be saved for posterity. However, when the government decides that it must dispose of a lighthouse, the public will be notified in advance, and in these cases there will be a mechanism for transferring the affected structures to interested third parties who come forward.

Process and communication are the keys here, a process that is relatively straightforward and can be understood and followed by Canadians, and which requires the government to communicate with its citizens before disposing of the structures. In this way, Canadians and their government can work together to protect the country's

lighthouses, and this is something that Canadians and their parliamentarians can agree is a desirable goal.

This brings me to the question of support for Bill S-215. I think it's fair to say that this bill has been around the block a few times. It's about to make its seventh appearance before the House of Commons. The issue and its proponents are clearly undeterred by rejection, but there are limits to the ability of even the most resilient advocates to continue the fight in the face of insurmountable obstacles. However, it appears that the landscape has changed now. With each reincarnation of the bill, there has been more discussion and more input at all levels. Lessons have been learned and compromises have been made on all sides.

In fact, we think there is a consensus in the making now. In such circumstances, it is tempting to consider Margaret Thatcher's firmly held definition of consensus as something to which everybody agrees but which nobody is happy about. But I don't think that's the case here. At least it would be fair to say that the heritage community recognizes that the compromises made along the way were a necessary part of that process, and we are happy with this bill.

Mr. Chair, it is time to move ahead. We therefore seek the committee's support for Bill S-215, and we ask that members offer their individual support when the matter comes before the House.

Thank you.

● (0930)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Bradley.

I thank you all for your presentations.

Certainly we know, as several of you have noted, that this has been ongoing for quite some time, but I believe there's a very positive feeling around the table here this time around, so we look forward to success. We deal with many issues here at the table in regard to fisheries, as you touched on earlier, and the preservation of our lighthouses is something I think we all agree we need to step up to the plate on, and we need to do something to work on it. So that's the purpose of us here today.

We're going to open up the floor for questions now, and we're going to begin with Mr. Byrne.

Welcome, Mr. Russell. I didn't see you when I came in.

I think you want to split your time with Mr. Russell. Did I understand that, Mr. Byrne?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.):** Yes. Are we going for two rounds today, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** I'd say we have time for two rounds.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** We'll probably use.... We'll see how it goes.

**The Chair:** We should have plenty of time. This is our witness for today, so basically we'll do a couple of full rounds. So feel free to take whatever time you need.

Your time has started.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to pick up on something that was mentioned by Ms. Bull and Monsieur Noreau, both of whom noted that heritage infrastructure that is currently under federal protection is underfunded for both protection and maintenance. In fact, the Auditor General's report was pretty ominous on this particular point. We certainly do support this, but we want to get some guidance from you.

Bill S-215 would add to the overall fiscal demands being drawn on for the preservation of heritage infrastructure from a fixed pot. There is no budgetary component built into Bill S-215 whatsoever. Should there be?

Also, if there's not, do you feel that the unfunded responsibilities that are created by this bill could further undermine existing heritage infrastructure because of the lack of funding? The jam is on the toast pretty thinly already. If we add to the overall inventory of heritage infrastructure without any additional funding involved, we're obviously spreading it even thinner still. What would you comment to that?

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** Thank you for your question.

I think it's important to note that the Auditor General recognized not just a lack of funding but also a lack of legal protection as being one of the issues. I think the emphasis of this bill is to put that process and that legal protection in place, and it's an important piece of the puzzle that's currently missing. So I don't think we want to lose sight of that fact.

I think funding is an issue in many areas. The purpose of this is really to put heritage conservation and heritage considerations on an equal footing with other requirements that departments already have to grapple with in managing property they own.

It's not about saying that because these are heritage buildings they all need to be restored instantly and need a significant increase in investment. I think it really is about putting in place a managed process and recognizing there is a need to invest over time.

I think that because this bill also includes measures to facilitate the transfer of heritage lighthouses to other owners who are willing and interested in stepping up to the plate and being part of their preservation and who would have access to other sources of funding that federally owned properties don't necessarily have access to, it does open up a positive future for these structures that they might not otherwise have.

• (0935)

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Mr. Noreau, do you wish to comment?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** Yes. I think once this bill is put in place, the guidelines will be there. Talking about the jam, about spreading the jam, if we have the proper guidelines, as Mrs. Bull was saying, I think there are quite a few people who could be interested in restoring, maintaining, etc., these beautiful lighthouses we have across the country. In my words, it's just a lack of organization that I see now. If the law is there and we have the proper legal guidelines, then we can have a set of guidelines for respecting the funds we may be able to get. That's my thought.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Thank you.

Basically, what you're saying is that the immediate impact on the fiscal framework as a result of passage of this bill would be minimal. You don't anticipate an immediate call for tens of millions or hundreds of millions of dollars, or millions of dollars even, to immediately be allocated to emergency restoration projects or anything like that. It can be a managed process. Has that summarized it?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** Managed, so there won't be stupid spending of funds. I'm not saying that at all. We need every little cent, but if it's managed properly, like Barry MacDonald in his region, and David in his region, etc., we'd be happy campers.

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** The legislation actually includes the term "reasonable standards". That's something that can be discussed, negotiated, and understood as part of the process.

Again, often there is a misconception that a heritage building needs immediate investment and pure restoration back to a certain point in its history. In fact, most heritage advocates are really just interested in making sure that structures are stabilized and that they will be maintained in such a way that over time we don't lose the ability to eventually restore those structures.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I think, Monsieur Noreau, your call for observance of the requirements of additional resources built into the heritage structures programming is well noted and appreciated by this committee.

I'm going to ask a question I think I already know the answer to, but I want to get it on the record. Would there be any consequences to lighthouses that have been divested or are on a long-term lease from the government?

David, you may be able to speak to this. There may be a few heritage lighthouses or lighthouse structures that are not fully divested but have actually been leased out from the federal government's inventory to private sector operators. Is there any consequence either to those lighthouses or to their owners as a result of this legislation?

I haven't spoken to the owners of Quirpon Lighthouse, but Mr. MacDonald raised it. Quirpon Lighthouse is on the northern tip of the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland and has been divested from the coast guard. It is now operated as a private sector bed and breakfast and is highly successful. Does this bill have any ramifications for them?

**Mr. David Bradley:** It would not for the current operators, I wouldn't think, not for the lighthouses that have already been divested and, I wouldn't imagine, for the ones that are on a long-term lease. It may have some implications for new private operators who come forward and want to take over lighthouses in future.

I think the legislation says that if they are to be divested or transferred, they would be transferred for a public purpose. It's not clear to me how you would define public purpose.

Overall, I think this is certainly a step forward. For those not-for-profit groups—and there are many more of those that have taken on the task of trying to restore or redevelop lighthouses—there isn't a clear process in place whereby they can move forward and work with the federal government to do that. I think this legislation would clarify that process and make it much more straightforward.

As you know, what would happen with a lot of the non-profit groups is that they would seek funds from other sources as well, to speak to the earlier issue on funding.

• (0940)

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** That's where I'm going with this. Mr. Noreau pointed out that there are various public-private partnerships that can evolve to actually facilitate the preservation.

On the public purpose, for example, let's step back in time and say a bed and breakfast operator wanted to take over Quirpon Lighthouse. They have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in fixing that structure up and brought it back to good historic and structural integrity. This bill would forbid that because it's not for a public purpose. It's for a private commercial purpose with obvious public advantages, but not for a public purpose.

This bill does not allow for a public-private partnership where ownership is transferred to a private sector operator as opposed to a not-for-profit corporation. Clearly a not-for-profit corporation, but not a private sector operator, could take over a lighthouse. Would I be correct in that conclusion?

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** I don't think that was the intent of the bill. I'm not a legal expert, and correct me if I'm wrong, but a lot of this will be defined when criteria and some of the specifics are written up for the bill.

We have one example in Nova Scotia, which is an excellent one. This lighthouse at Cape d'Or at the head of the Bay of Fundy has not been transferred yet from the coast guard. There's a lease in place with Cumberland County, which leases the lighthouse from the coast guard, and they in turn have leased it to a private entrepreneur who runs it as a bed and breakfast.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't see anything in this bill that would prevent a transfer of that property. I think that's what you're getting at. Regarding a direct transfer of that property from DFO, if it were considered for the bill, I don't see any problem.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** That's a question I think we're going to have to investigate further.

**The Chair:** You'll be able to get back to that in the next round.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, BQ):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Good day, ladies and gentlemen. I will probably pick up where Gerry left off.

The aim of the bill is to designate certain structures as heritage lighthouses. However, no indication is given that additional funding will be made available. Once these structures have received their heritage designation, once petitions have been filed and the process has followed its course, hopefully we will not be left with an empty shell, meaning that hopefully we will not have created a phenomenon where ultimately, in terms of managing these structures, we are no better off than we were before.

Despite these concerns and the fact that the bill does not provide for any funding, you are fully in favour of the proposed legislation.

I'm trying to understand why that is. It's always possible to improve upon or amend a bill, but I sense that as far as you are concerned, the bill as it now stands is perfect. On that score, I disagree with you.

I am not saying that heritage lighthouses are not worth spending our energy on. Quite the contrary, in fact. The riding that I represent had to fight to have some heritage lighthouses repatriated. I'm thinking here about the Pointe-à-la-Renommée lighthouse which was once located in the Quebec City area but now is back home in the Gaspé region. If memory serves me correctly, this year the community marked this structure's 150th anniversary. Through sheer will and effort, members of the community manage, year after year, with the help of volunteers and a non-profit organization, to ensure that this lighthouse remains a part of our heritage. The lighthouse has become a major tourist attraction. This is where I'm coming from as I try to understand your comments.

• (0945)

[*English*]

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** The issue of funding is one I really can speak to. I join my colleague Mr. Noreau in saying we'd like to have a wheelbarrow full of money for every lighthouse in the Maritimes. We realize that's not going to happen right away. My understanding is that this bill will put in place a process whereby maybe there will be some funding down the road.

The only thing I can speak to from experience is twofold. Number one is the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. I don't know what pot it has come out of, but recently there's been some work done, at least in the Maritimes and in Ontario, for some lighthouse properties that have been passed over. There's been a real concern for environmental contamination in some of these properties. I'm sure you're aware in Quebec that you have quite a lot of mercury-based lights down there.

There's been a process in place to take so many lighthouses per year over the past couple of years and do an environmental check and to clean up—remediation on the site. We have a couple in Nova Scotia, for instance. They've gone in and done proper environmental remediation where lead paint is concerned. They've gone in and checked for hydrocarbons. Kerosene was the only thing that was ever used in some of the smaller lights.

There has been some money spent in preparation for passing over a lighthouse to a community group. In other words, DFO have recognized the fact that there's a community group very interested in taking over the lighthouse. It's not really fair to pass a lighthouse over—which was the case with Cape Forchu, as I mentioned in my presentation—and saddle them with a huge bill right off the bat. There's been an effort made, and I'm assuming it will continue. I don't know, as I said, what pot that comes out of. The environmental... I think it comes out of something called a green fund. Correct me if I'm wrong.



As well, the other point I wanted to make is that with the passage of this bill and with more lighthouses being passed over to community groups, you then harness a huge volunteer workforce across the country, which has to count for something. These people go out and do all this work, from painting lighthouses, to manning them in the summertime, to running them as museums, and so on. We've had discussions for the last couple of years whereby we never had a vision, once this lighthouse act is passed, that huge amounts of money would be spent at one time. A process would be in place whereby it would be done in steps.

[Translation]

**Mr. Reynald Blais:** Excuse me for interrupting you, but would it be more accurate to say that the status quo is unacceptable? That's one angle, but departmental officials who testified yesterday, Tuesday, talked about costs in the neighbourhood of \$65 million associated with this bill. As I recall, the figures quoted were in the tens of millions of dollars. They indicated that the funds would have to be found elsewhere, not actually from supplementary estimates. In essence, this bill creates additional commitments.

The status quo is unacceptable, but the bill as it is now worded will not rectify the problem. We have a similar aim, namely to rectify the situation. We cannot allow these heritage lighthouses to further deteriorate with every passing year without taking steps to allow well-meaning people like yourself to work toward preserving these structures.

• (0950)

[English]

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** I would like to comment that the bill doesn't include a requirement to restore, to invest over and above reasonable maintenance. In fact, the requirement for reasonable maintenance of government property exists already; it shouldn't be tied to legislation that is about protecting heritage character and recognizing a special class of structures within the federal inventory.

I think it's important to be clear that any property owner has an obligation to maintain property to a reasonable standard. If it's a case of property that the federal government no longer has a use for and needs to move out of the federal inventory, there are people who Barry and others have mentioned who are interested in becoming the custodians of those sites.

We really need to emphasize that this legislation is not just about holding.... It's certainly not about imposing a higher level of care on federal property. It's about ensuring reasonable maintenance, and it accomplishes a number of other benefits for heritage lighthouses. It's really not just about the maintenance side of the question.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Blais.

Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all very much for coming today. I know you've passed along congratulations to senators and MPs, but it's really we who thank you for your efforts. We have the easy part: we just do the legislative framework to get it through. You're the ones who are in the trenches doing the work.

Peter, I'm an old "orange tail" myself. I retired from the red team in 1997, after the amalgamation. It's good to see a fellow airline person.

But \$270,000 of your own money probably doesn't even include your time. Mr. MacDonald is absolutely correct: there's a deep... more than just love and affection. It's in your soul, when you see these things; it's part of your heritage. And Peter, when you and I are long gone, that lighthouse will be there for other children and their children to see, so congratulations to you for that effort.

I just got a copy of Bill S-220, which is the Heritage Railway Station Act. I noticed there was no funding attached to that bill, such as my colleagues have asked for as well.

Natalie, you indicated the importance of getting this bill through. I think if we attached  $x$  number of dollars to a particular bill—which wasn't done in the case of the railway act, by the way—it would probably hinder what the government's response may or may not be. If we say  $x$  number of dollars, it may not be that high. Or it may need more, and then we're handcuffed in that regard.

I think, as Mr. Keddy said in our previous meetings, that it's important to get the process through. Then, once the criteria and the dollars are set in—and of course groups like yours will have access to funding as well from various other sources in order to maintain the integrity and protection of this act....

I'd like your comments on that.

Also, my understanding, when Mr. Byrne asked a valid question about the public partnership—about a private owner buying an island with a lighthouse on it, which may restrict the public access to it.... I guess that's one of the concerns the government has: that if a group takes over a lighthouse—we'll say the Cape Forchu lighthouse—the public still have some form of access to the area.

I think that is a major criterion for this: if an individual buys it on their own—I don't want to denigrate these folks, but if a rich American buys an island with a lighthouse on it and then restricts everybody else from getting on it—that I think would not be a good thing. I'd like your comments on that as well.

Again, congratulations to all of you for the work that you've done.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** Thank you, Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** Thank you.

I can answer that. In my case, I put my money in. I did the work myself. I paid for everything.

From a tourist point of view, just to give you the example of my lighthouse, it's up now even to the big cruise ships that come into Quebec City. They go by the lighthouse at one, two, or three knots, and you see all kinds of people taking pictures, and so on. That's one point. That doesn't give me a nickel. They see the lighthouse in immaculate condition. Everything is perfect down there where I am.

I'm jumping from one issue to the other.

Coming back to what this gentleman was saying a few minutes ago, from an environmental point of view, that's the only little bit of help that I got from the federal government, and I can recognize that. When I first took over the lighthouse, there were two big reservoirs that were leaking diesel fuel because they had rusted out at the bottom. That was all going into the ocean, where the whales are, and you name it. Did I ever holler.

I can admit that I got help from a couple of good human beings from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Quebec City. In particular, I want to name one person, Mr. Donald Moffet, who is an employee there, who is so devoted to the project of the lighthouses, even on his own time. What a super individual to work with.

So we do have a little bit of help like that. We organized with Environment Canada, and when they saw it, everybody said, well, that's it. We got everybody together, and we finally got that resorbed.

You were talking about the mercury issue. In my case, the lighthouse was cleaned up. Why? Because I'm very isolated, but I do have quite a few people who come down. I don't restrict anything. They're more than welcome to come down. It's a good walk, and a good walk back. You climb for 4.4 kilometres. I have quite a few people.

Then I have people who come down in these small boats, kayaks. I'm involved with the blue route, because I'm in the marine park of the St. Lawrence River. We have all these committees working together, and people come in, in kayaks, and they use the facilities, the toilets that I restored entirely. They have picnics on the grounds. There's only one thing that I ask: that people not light a campfire, because if it gets away from them in the wind or something like that, there are huge mountains on the site that will lose all their value. So those are just the small criteria.

I'm jumping between issues just to make a general picture for you of what has happened in my case, and basically, the other lighthouses on the St. Lawrence that we're trying to save work roughly like that.

So I'm coming back to what I said before. The law project is an excellent issue. It gives you guidelines.

Once the job is done on one lighthouse, a real estate person could come in and make a fortune on that. I'm totally against that.

No matter whether you want to give it to a corporation like mine, or sell it, or whatever...but if somebody would come in, no matter whether it's for political reasons or for real estate reasons, and take over my lighthouse, I can tell you, knowing my character, I'd be in court the next morning and things would happen.

• (0955)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Never mess with an Irish Quebecker.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** That's what they say.

I want to thank you kindly. It touches us deeply, what you said before, thanking us for what we've done. I worked my buns off on that, and I'm sure these guys did the same.

Away you go. That's very well appreciated.

Thanks again for this project. I'm totally in favour of it. Let's get some guidelines, make things legal, and then afterwards, if there's an

amendment or whatever that has to be issued, I think we can come back to this table and talk about it another time.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Stoffer.

Mr. Keddy, for ten minutes.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to our witnesses here this morning.

It's a bit of déjà vu, I think, for all of us. But at least we're at the committee stage, and I really feel quite positive that we have an opportunity here to pass this piece of legislation. I've talked to my colleagues opposite about this bill several times, and in a former incarnation, but I don't think we should underestimate a couple of issues. Maybe before I do that, I would echo Mr. Stoffer's comments on the great work that you folks have all done on the ground in pushing this and promoting it through its various incarnations, and of course the work of past Senators Mike Forestall, Carney, Murray, and others.

But I would implore my colleagues opposite not to miss this opportunity to get this bill in. To begin with, it's not as simple as saying it's a DFO responsibility because, quite frankly, when this goes to heritage status it will go through Environment Canada for any remediation and then it will become Parks Canada's responsibility. And, of all the lights, I expect some of the lights would stay under DFO responsibility after they get heritage status. Hopefully, some of them would be maintained as working light stations. Therefore, it will be incumbent upon the federal government to keep those up to heritage standards.

You had a very good point, Mr. Byrne, about public-private, but the idea of private is not excluded in this legislation. If there are no adjacent groups or community groups who are willing to take over a heritage light, it is divested and it is on the divestiture list. It can go to private individuals. And, quite frankly, that would be better than losing the light entirely. It's not a matter of just being able to cherry-pick. There are a number of issues here about which we do have to be reasonable and practical. We've got a great example of a private individual at the table, who has a lighthouse and has spent a lot of private money on it to keep it up to heritage standard.

I'd like to talk a bit more. I know there's a concern about no dollars being designated, and I think Mr. Stoffer had a good comparison there on the fact that the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act went through without dollars designated. But we also have a fair amount of time.

I'd like a comment from our witnesses. We don't know exactly how many lights are going to be designated at this time. We have a petition process that will be put into place. It's a minimum of two years before we're going to have any lights designated, and it could be a maximum of five to seven years before we're actually through this process—or four years.

So I'd like some comments on that process and how many lights you think there may be in total, from your points of view.

•(1000)

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** There's been an inventory done over the past couple of years by DFO, to come up with the number of possible candidates under this bill. While I don't have the exact figure, it's somewhere in the vicinity of 250 lighthouses that would be possible candidates. Someone came up with the figure—and I think Natalie can back me up on this—that with the railroad station act it was 60% of possible candidates that were actually selected at the end of the day. So if we use that 60% for the lighthouses—this is all arbitrary—at the end of the day we could come up with, say, 180 lighthouses that could be possible candidates under this bill.

You make a very good point. At the end of the day, we would like to see as many of these light stations transfer to community groups as there are community groups to accept them. But we fully realize that we aren't going to be able to save them all, for sure.

We had the discussion quite a number of years ago with the Canada Lands Company. The divestiture system was first tried in the maritime region, and Canada Lands took exception and said that these are expensive coastal properties and we should be getting fair market value back into federal coffers for these properties. We made the argument at that time that you can't treat lighthouses like filing cabinets or something owned in crown assets, and we won the argument. But we had to realize as well that if there aren't any community groups to take these as part of the divestiture process, which is very fair, then they are sold at market value at the end of the day.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** One small comment. If you're referring to the railroad stations, don't use that too much as an example. In my area the railroad stations are in the middle of the city. Lighthouses in my area are extremely isolated, and I know of some in Newfoundland that are. So that may bring down the percentages. Instead of using the word 60%, maybe it's down to 40%.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy:** And I wouldn't disagree with that. Because of the remoteness, I actually think there will be some of these lights that will be difficult to divest, in all honesty. So the private aspect of this may be very important at the end of the day.

A couple of other comments. Unfortunately Mr. Miller, who is sponsoring this bill, couldn't be here today, and I know he sends his regrets that he was unable to be here to greet the witnesses. We quite often think of this as a coastal Canada thing—the east coast and the west coast. I have to admit, Larry sat behind me in the House for a while, and when we were talking about this bill coming to the House of Commons, and I knew I wouldn't be able to have carriage of it, he said he'd love to do that. I asked him why the devil he would want that. I think he has eleven lighthouses in Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, or there are seven in his riding and eleven around him—a remarkable number of these beautiful stone lighthouses. They are quite incredible buildings. So it is something that cuts across Canada from coast to coast. There's a lot of public support out there.

Senator Carney presented some pictures that I think came from Barry. We don't want the Mosher Islands of this world, where the lighthouse is simply torn down and burnt—tipped over and set on fire. Had this bill been in existence earlier... Cape Forchu is a relatively new light. It's a cement light. It's the apple-core style of light, and the wooden light there was torn down. It's a very historic

light station area, but the light itself is from the 1980s. It may be a bit older than that.

Anyway, I'm just going to open up the floor, if I have any time left to our witnesses, if they have any other comments they want to make.

•(1005)

**Mr. David Bradley:** Perhaps I could make one comment about the question of isolated lighthouses. I think that will be the most difficult issue to deal with, there's no question about that. Many of them are so remote that it's virtually impossible for most people to get to them.

The thing about this legislation, as we said earlier, is it's not ideal, in the sense that it's not going to provide absolute protection for all of these structures. We know that. The government knows that. But it's a good first step. It's a solid move forward. It's something that I think is desperately needed. To go back to Mr. Blais' comments about the money situation, that's something we'll all try to deal with once we have some legislation that provides a decent process for moving forward. I think we do need to get on with this, no question about it.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy:** Yes.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** I didn't think about this in my closing remarks. You have to realize that it's been told to me many, many times over the past 12 years that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is in the marine safety business, not in the heritage business.

To go back to your earlier comments about tearing down Mosher Island and then burning it, those are photos that the coast guard has come to hate. In all fairness to the coast guard, particularly over the past five years, since a lot of people within the department are starting to really take this legislation seriously, we've gotten really good cooperation from DFO.

For a long time, for me and my colleagues in Nova Scotia, it was strictly on a provincial level, but since we've moved up to the national level—this being a national act we're trying to get passed here—we've also been dealing first-hand with folks here in Ottawa. I can't say enough for the positive cooperation that I've gotten. I want to go on record as thanking these folks. David Burton, director of divestiture, and all his department—Patricia Kell, Doug Tapley—have all given us excellent cooperation. They've done a lot of work behind the scenes, and I think they deserve a good debt of gratitude here as well.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.)):** Thank you very much, Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Keddy.

We're going to go to our second round of questioning now. It's going to be for five minutes duration per party.

We're going to start with Mr. Russell, please.

**Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning to each of you.

My colleague Scott Simms sends his regrets, as he's recuperating.

It's very timely that I'm here. One of our cultural landmarks in Labrador, the Point Amour lighthouse, which Skipper Noreau may be familiar with, celebrated 150 years of its first lighting on April 1. The community organizations down there, in conjunction with various levels of government, have done a fantastic job in preserving that particular structure and the surrounding buildings. I have a picture here, from *Labrador Life*, commemorating this particular icon along the coast of Labrador. And there are others, certainly.

In principle, this is good legislation, and from what I'm hearing, technically it seems to be good legislation. But I have a couple of questions.

You talk about divestiture. The federal government already has a divestiture policy. I'm not totally familiar with it, but usually, if you have a federally owned building or some asset, it would go to the province first, or it may be to the municipality, then down to a non-profit organization, and last but not least maybe to an individual.

Does this at all affect that policy? Does it strengthen that particular policy? What does this do differently from what already exists?

So we have a divestiture policy. Now, when it comes to other types of crown assets, at times, such as in the case of certain ports or harbour infrastructure, the government will put in place specific divestiture dollars. In the last budget, for instance, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announced, I believe, \$10 million to remediate or bring certain pieces of infrastructure up to par before they divested them. Would something like that be contemplated, out of this legislation?

Thirdly, you say that the government already has, for federally owned buildings and assets, an obligation to maintain them, to keep them at a certain level. That's the argument I've heard some witnesses make.

How does this differ, in terms of the obligations the federal government has? I'm thinking that while we can talk about statutory legal protection that would institute certain standards, even in saying that there must be some costs involved. While we advocate for this bill, we have to advocate for additional dollars, because there is some fear that you will take already-existing infrastructure dollars and stretch them or put them somewhere else. That's a concern.

If we're going to put all of our cards on the table, if we're going to pass this bill, we need to have some commitment from the government that it comes with some money. It has to come with some money, and we need to see some identified.

I'll just leave that open to you people.

•(1010)

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** I'd like to respond to that.

Concerning your references to existing policy—the divestiture policy, the Treasury Board policy for heritage—I think the key point is that it's a policy, and when property managers are weighing the requirements that they need to deal with in their roles, policy can fall off the table and you really focus more on statutory requirements. As the Auditor General noted, it's really about accountability.

This would bring an increased level of accountability to those managing heritage lighthouses. The current divestiture policy

requires the departments to make best efforts in ensuring that the property will be protected and treated appropriately after it leaves the federal inventory. But with this legislation, the minister's approval would actually be involved in looking at the future of the lighthouse: the potential ownership, the potential use of the building, and also the level of protection it would be afforded.

Typically, with the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act, there's a requirement that the property have a protective covenant in place when it's divested, or that it be subjected to heritage protection at some other level of government. That's the difference.

You questioned whether there would be a requirement to invest before divesting. I don't see that requirement here. The only mention in the legislation, as we have it before us, is for reasonable maintenance while it is in the federal inventory.

Again, the existing obligation to maintain property is an obligation that federal property owners must comply with, but this is about increased accountability and ensuring that those measures are taken.

•(1015)

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Thank you very much, Ms. Bull.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier, I heard someone say that you currently own a lighthouse, Mr. Noreau. Could you tell me how you acquired this structure?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** I do not own the lighthouse. I am the head of the Corporation du Phare de Cap-au-Saumon. I set up a non-profit organization in order to satisfy government criteria. Our goal, quite simply, was to preserve a historical heritage structure.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Could you explain to me how your organization went about acquiring this particular lighthouse?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** We set up a corporation in order to satisfy the government's ownership criteria.

This corporation is registered with Quebec's *Inspecteur général des institutions financières*. I signed a memorandum of understanding with the federal government, and specifically with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and this arrangement has worked out exceedingly well. These officials placed their trust in me because I solemnly swore that I would restore the lighthouse to its original state. And that is exactly what happened. We respected the structure's architectural features, matched the colours, and everything else you can imagine. The lighthouse looks exactly like it did when it was first built.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** You said the lighthouse was located in a very remote area.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** Indeed, it is very difficult to access the structure.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Where exactly is it located?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** It is located in the Charlevoix region, very close to the communities of Port-au-Persil and Saint-Siméon and approximately forty kilometres east of La Malbaie.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** How much did you pay to acquire this structure?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** I invested over \$270,000, not to mention my time, the wear and tear on my car, gas, accommodation and food. To my mind, these are secondary considerations. I spent a great deal of money, and I have the photographs to prove it, but I was not the only one who did.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Basically, I'm curious as to the overall cost of restoring the lighthouse? Was it \$270,000?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** I personally invested that sum of money in this venture. We are talking about major work, that is putting new roofs on five buildings, doing some structural work, and so on and so forth.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** So then, if I understand you correctly, a corporation was created. However, the venture's main financial backer...

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** The corporation was set up merely to satisfy government criteria.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** That is just what I was about to say.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** In essence, a non-profit organization is nothing more than a corporate entity.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** So then, you are the principal financial backer.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** I am the head of the corporation and the only person involved, along with my spouse, of course. In terms of corporate structure, that's all there is. I was asked to get insurance to satisfy civil liability criteria. I have my own hydro meter, to avoid squabbles. God knows that there has been some squabbling, despite the fact that the site had been abandoned for about thirty years. It was in need of some attention.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** No doubt the bill will not really change your situation in any way. However, could it mean some changes overall?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** As far as my situation is concerned, the bill will not change anything since the restoration has already been completed. However, I do think it could help ensure that other structures are restored. As this member was saying, the bill could eventually be amended to make provision for some financial assistance.

I briefly mentioned to Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Bradley that I would not want to see our lighthouses become costly pieces of real estate just so wealthy Americans, as Mr. Stoffer was saying, could come in and buy them up by skirting the law. That is not what we want.

We want to preserve lighthouses. Ms. Bull from the Heritage Canada Foundation is here to attest to that fact. If the funding was available, it might be possible. We would need some sound guidelines in place, to avoid any kind of underhanded action. That is where we should be focusing our energy.

[*English*]

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** I have one comment. A good part of the cost to put these light stations like Mr. Noreau's back in shape is because there has been nothing done to these buildings for so long. Mr. Noreau can back me up on this. Once these light stations were destaffed—I can speak from experience in the Maritimes region—

there was almost no maintenance—zero maintenance—done on these buildings. If you let any kind of building, whether concrete, wood, or whatever it is built from, go... I like to call this cost associated with bringing these back “deferred maintenance”. That's what I like to call it from DFO's perspective, because they have done nothing for so many years.

I'd like to use one example in Quebec. I don't know if it's part of your riding or not, but one of our real lighthouse pioneers in the country is Yves Foucreault. He's at La Martre.

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** Yes, he is at La Martre.

[*English*]

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** When you go to his lighthouse, you almost feel you should take off your shoes when you go inside, really. This is how well he takes care of this lighthouse.

This lighthouse has not been divested, but Monsieur Foucreault has taken it upon himself, and he's got the passion I spoke about in my presentation. He makes the care of this building his personal responsibility. If Mr. Foucreault were here today, I'm sure he could tell you he goes quite regularly, yearly, to DFO and says he needs paint and paintbrushes, just simple things to keep up that light. He does the yearly maintenance that was done by a keeper when a lightkeeper was on staff.

The cost to DFO when and if that lighthouse is passed over under the divestiture program will be zero. We've got Mr. Foucreault to thank for that. It's too bad we didn't have an Yves Foucreault at a lot of lighthouses in this country.

The reason for some of these initial costs—and some of them aren't that great, the cost of bringing these things up to standard—is because there's been no maintenance for so many years. Now they're faced with bills, but it's deferred payments.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Thank you, Mr. MacDonald.

We'll go now to Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Going back to people's passion for these lighthouses, I know Mr. Keddy represents the Lighthouse Route. When people drive down there, they will see many lighthouses along the way. It is a tourist attraction.

So the provinces themselves get greatly involved. I know you had mentioned Cape Forchu; the province has part of that.

Newfoundland and Labrador—have you had a chance to speak to the province about the possibility of being a partner in this? Mr. Noreau for Quebec, and Mr. MacDonald for... I know Nova Scotia has before.

Natalie, can you mention other provinces or territories across the country? Are there other interested parties besides the federal government and local community groups, maybe certain businesses? The provinces themselves may wish to be involved in raising the level of awareness of these lighthouses.

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** I think that level of interest is national. These structures attract people and organizations in every province. I know, for example, in British Columbia, the Land Conservancy of B.C. has expressed an interest in acquiring lighthouses they could incorporate into their tourist sites.

**Mr. David Bradley:** There have been a variety of arrangements in Newfoundland and Labrador. The provincial government has already been directly involved in a couple of them, the one Mr. Russell mentioned at Point Amour. It was developed in part with funding from the provincial government, but it's managed by a local group. It's a very good two-way relationship.

There are others. Cape Bonavista is entirely a provincial historic sites operation.

We have many other examples where community groups have taken on the task, as in your district, Mr. Matthews, down in Rose Blanche. There is much more of that kind of example than of direct provincial government involvement.

With respect to the provincial government becoming more involved—

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Once this bill was enacted.

**Mr. David Bradley:** It's possible. It would depend on the location.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Understandably.

**Mr. David Bradley:** And other circumstances.

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** From a tourist point of view, the provincial government is a little bit interested in my area, no more than that, in all the lighthouses we have, but no help.

Municipalities, depending where the lighthouse is situated, as Mr. Bradley mentioned, some of them, yes; in my case it's totally no. I have letters on that, saying they're not at all interested. Municipalities, I'd say roughly fifty-fifty, depending on where it's situated, to promote tourism....

• (1025)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Sure.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** In Nova Scotia we have limited involvement with the province, I would have to say, at the present time. There are a couple of reasons for that. In Nova Scotia we take our lighthouses seriously, even at the provincial level. Of course Peggy's Cove is our tourist icon and featured on so many of our tourism brochures, and so on.

One of the concerns the Province of Nova Scotia has had for the past several years is that they didn't want to inherit a bunch of lighthouses that had huge price tags associated with them. Environmental cleanup was one of their biggest concerns.

We've had preliminary discussions with our tourism minister within the last two months about this, and the Province of Nova Scotia is waiting, like a lot of people, to see where this act is going. I think the act is going to play a part in their direct involvement. They fully realize the lighthouses' tourism and economic value, as Mr. Stoffer said. In Mr. Keddy's riding, on the way down Highway 103, there's a huge sign that was recently put up, "The Lighthouse Route".

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Yes, a great big one.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** You can't miss it; it's as big as the wall back there.

So the province fully realizes the tourism value, and they also realize the cultural and heritage value. The lighthouses are very much a part of the heritage fabric of our province, as they are in all maritime provinces, wherever you are—whether the Great Lakes, the west coast, or Lake Winnipeg, it's the same thing. So I think we can count on the Province of Nova Scotia for increased involvement as time goes on, and with the passage of this act, as I said.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Mr. Kamp.

**Mr. Randy Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for coming and for your interest in and support of this piece of legislation.

I just have one question, and then I'll defer to my colleague, Mr. Calkins.

As you know, within the federal inventory there are both operational lighthouses and those considered to be surplus. The bill refers to those surplus lighthouses, as well as others. The designation process in the bill can apply to both, in that both can be designated and petitioned. So my question for each of you, or your organizations, is whether your primary interest is in acquiring surplus lighthouses, or in designating operational lighthouses, with no intention of.... Are you just doing it for their heritage value, for example, rather than seeing them being divested at some point in the future, if you understand my question?

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** I think from Heritage Canada Foundation's perspective, the goal is to look at lighthouses and in a triage process to identify the ones that are worthy of designation and protection. That really is regardless of ownership. The goal is basically to review the lighthouses that exist, and then from there you can give appropriate priority to certain lighthouses, whether they will stay in the federal inventory or be moved into another form of ownership through the process allowed for in the act.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Mr. Bradley.

**Mr. David Bradley:** I don't think any heritage organization in the country wants to rush out and acquire federal buildings when the federal government still has a purpose for them and still wants to operate them. That's the best scenario, even for historic lighthouses—if they're still operational. Heritage groups step into the fold when there's a need. Obviously, there's going to be significant need in the country in that respect, because lighthouses are being decommissioned.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Yes, but where I'm trying to go with this question is to ask if you are simply interested, as I think Ms. Bull said, in getting involved in the petitioning process to have, let's say, a large number of lighthouses—and perhaps you have a number in mind, as you've already looked at the inventory of lighthouses, whether they're operational or not—that you think should be designated and come under the protection of this act, rather than looking forward to acquiring federal property at some point. Are you just interested in the process of saying you think that's a lighthouse that should be protected for heritage purposes, regardless of whether you think somebody else should own and operate it at some time in the future?

• (1030)

**Mr. David Bradley:** We're interested in both. We want to make sure that the properties are protected, and if the federal government is interested in maintaining those properties, we consider that to be the best scenario. But in cases where that's not going to happen, we have to look for alternatives.

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** I think that regardless of ownership, these are structures that are facing a particular kind of pressure right now. Regardless of ownership, there's a need to look at what we have and make some identification of priorities before we move forward.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** I can speak to this in two ways. As I said earlier in my presentation, part of our mandate, at the end of the day, is to get as many of these lighthouses transferred to community groups as there are viable community groups who will accept them. That definitely is part of our mandate.

To speak to the other part of your question, there are lighthouses and there are situations where.... I'll use the example of Sambro Island, off the mouth of Halifax harbour, which this year celebrates 250 years. It was just featured on a Canada Post stamp in December. It's the oldest operating lighthouse in North and South America, so it has a ton of history behind it.

Unless the Department of Fisheries and Oceans have changed their mind recently, we were told that this lighthouse is not on the block for divestiture. Yet it's been a classified structure under FHBRO for the past ten years now. There's also an associated gashouse on the property, where acetylene gas was manufactured, and that's a recognized structure under FHBRO.

This, I think, is what you're getting at. This is the flagship lighthouse for our society, the one that's featured on our pin. We will definitely be sending a petition to the minister to have that one declared a heritage light station, even though we've been told that it's not up for grabs, that it's not on the block for divestiture.

There are also some examples on the west coast, in Senator Carney's country. Estevan Point, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, is one I like to cite. That's a flying buttress tower that was designed by our famous Canadian marine architect, William P. Anderson; there's one in Pointe-au-Père that's very similar. It's a very famous lighthouse, because Colonel Anderson apparently camped out on site while the lighthouse was being built in 1910. It has a historic Chance Brothers lantern room in it. It just says "heritage" all over it; yet it's one for which it's very doubtful there will be a community group capable of having it transferred to them, because

of its location. Does that make it any less important on the heritage scale? I don't think so. It should be a designated heritage lighthouse.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Thank you very much.

That concludes our second round of questioning. I'm at the guidance of my colleagues. If you want to continue for another little bit, we can. I understand Mr. Calkins wants to.

If colleagues are agreeable, then we'll use the flexibility of another couple of minutes, if you so desire.

I'm going to let Mr. Calkins go, and that will finish them up. Then we'll come back to finish this round.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** I wanted to suggest that we open the floor to members who have not yet had the opportunity to put their questions.

[*English*]

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** I have no problem with that, if it's the desire of my colleagues.

Mr. Calkins, go ahead for a couple of minutes, please.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate your indulgence.

I'm very interested in following the same line of questioning as Mr. Kamp. Just to build on it, I know, Mr. Noreau, that during your testimony you indicated there were a certain number of lighthouses in your area of the St. Lawrence. Could you repeat the number for me?

• (1035)

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** It was 43.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** I would imagine you're well connected with the various organizations or groups in that particular area who would be interested in petitioning lighthouses. How many of the 43 do you imagine the government would receive petitions on, should this bill pass?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** I'd say right now, at least 15 of them.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** At least 15?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** In the case of the rest of them, the people are not aware, not everybody. I'd say from the tourist point of view, just from my own little survey—maybe it's different in the Maritimes—in my area, 95% of the people have never seen a lighthouse, so they're really impressed.

As Mrs. Bull was saying, the ownership—dah, dah, dah.... We can talk about it day in and day out, but if our lighthouses are saved and in good shape—

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** How many of those 43 are operational?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** Just about all are operational, because they're automated. From what I know, DFO strictly maintains that if the safety of their employees is involved to maintain the site and structure, like the helipad for helicopter safety, the little boardwalk, the stairs to get up to the lighthouse, that's the end of it. All the rest is bingo.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Mr. MacDonald, could you give the committee any indication as to how many lighthouses you expect the government would receive petitions on? Is that something you would know, based on the connections you have with the organizations you know?

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** It's very difficult to come up with a number across the country right now, although I hope we'll have that soon.

As an example, we have always had the greatest number of lights in Canada in Nova Scotia. At one time we had 350 lighthouses within the province of Nova Scotia. Right now there are 160, but that's not lighthouses as we would think of them as they apply to this legislation. Right now, with all the work we've done over the past number of years, we have approximately 14 to 16 lighthouses that either have been transferred or are in the process of being transferred to community groups. There are probably that many again that community groups haven't attached themselves to yet. The province of Nova Scotia has the biggest number of lighthouses, if you want to use that as a ratio.

It's not fair to compare. In Prince Edward Island, for instance, there's been a real pioneering effort for quite some time, going right back to 1984. There are 22 lighthouses in various stages of tourism-ready, with groups attached to them. You have to realize, unlike Mr. Noreau's area, accessibility in P.E.I. is not a problem. It's nice flat country and lighthouses are in very accessible and scenic areas.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** It's a nice drive to get to them. I was there last summer.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** They take very good care of their lighthouses in P.E.I.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** From an architectural perspective—and you touched on architecture—I took a look at the stamps that were issued. These lighthouses have very different architectures, whether they're east or west coast. It's based, I guess, on access to local supplies, whether they're inland or beside some of the freshwater lakes. We've got ones that appear to be built in circles; they may be built out of stone.

Out of all the different architectural styles, how many different varieties are there across Canada? Can anybody comment on that?

**Mr. Peter Noreau:** There are 249 or 250 if you want to look at it really closely, but I'm aware of nine different basic styles.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** That's pretty close. We have the really old lighthouses like the Imperial Towers on the Great Lakes, on both coasts, and in Cap des Rosiers in Quebec, for instance. They're built from stone and they're very old lighthouses from the mid-1800s.

Newfoundland and Labrador has the greatest selection of architectural styles owing to the fact that Newfoundland didn't come into Confederation until 1949. Lighthouses were designed and a lot

of them were built in the U.K. and shipped over here. They're cast iron construction and bolted or riveted together. You have concrete.

• (1040)

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** I imagine there are some wood structures.

**Mr. Barry MacDonald:** There are all kinds of wooden lighthouses.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** May I have a few more seconds?

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** We'll have to finish up now, because we'll be back wanting to get out of Canada again if you keep going.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** When it comes to the preservation of our natural history, our heritage, Parks Canada is charged with the preservation of our natural history. The national parks are there to capture a certain percentage. The World Wildlife Fund usually sets targets of 10% to 12% preservation of representative samples of the natural history of Canada. For example, you get the mountain parks, grasslands, the Arctic, and maritime areas.

Ms. Bull, what do you see as a reasonable percentage of lighthouses of various architectural styles in various regions that should be protected to get the salient amount of historical preservation?

**Mrs. Natalie Bull:** We try to get away from the Noah's ark approach to conservation, where you have two of each. It is a specialty. The act provides for our process to be put in place to evaluate the lighthouses using a number of criteria, and often it's weighted criteria with a scoring system. That's how the railway stations were reviewed as part of that legislation.

There are a number of factors. I don't think it's really fair to try to arrive at a particular number. Again, as we've talked about throughout the course of this hearing, one of the factors is ultimately ownership, who these places end up being owned by.

The goal of this legislation is to recognize and protect heritage character, and also to engage communities in the process of deciding what's important to them and being part of protecting it.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Thank you very much.

We have to move along quickly here.

Mr. MacAulay. No?

Mr. Byrne, do I understand that you have a quick question, or do we go to Mr. Blais?

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** We'll go to Mr. Blais, because I think my question is in the process of being answered.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Mr. Blais or Mr. Malo?

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** I'm fine.

[English]

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** Mr. Stoffer, are you okay?

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Just fine, sir. I could go golfing, but I'm all right.



**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Bill Matthews):** You know what I meant.

I want to thank you people for coming. It's a real pleasure to have you here.

We've given this issue a significant amount of time and thoroughness this morning, which I think it deserves. Coming from the south coast of Newfoundland, I share the views of my colleagues and know the great culture, heritage, and benefit of what we're talking about today, the close connection with the sea.

I realize the benefit. The area I come from and my home community have suffered great losses to the ocean. So it means a lot to us to sit here and talk about these issues, as we should as parliamentarians.

And I thank my colleagues for their indulgence of being here. I wish you all good luck. The committee will be back at work again on Tuesday.

With that, I'll adjourn the meeting.

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