

House of Commons Speech re Bill C-465: An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day

June 16, 2010

Daryl Kramp, MP
Prince Edward-Hastings

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to address Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day, that calls for September 23 of every year to be designated as a special day of recognition.

Kudos to the member for Northumberland—Quinte West today for bringing forward this bill. He is a colleague of mine. He is a neighbour. We share a pair of ridings that truly are a paradise for fishermen, for hunters, for people who love the outdoors, a rural community that recognizes not only is this a passion and a way of life for many people but it is also a serious form of income and support for the people in our ridings.

Most people probably are aware, but for those who are not, the tourism sector is a major recipient of fishing and hunting activities. It is the largest employer in Canada, so it has a significant impact across this country.

A national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day would give Canadians an opportunity to celebrate the longstanding practices of hunting, trapping and fishing in Canada. It would recognize the contribution that Canada's hunters, trappers and anglers have made to the settlement of Canada.

By supporting Bill C-465, the Government of Canada is in line with a similar recognition that is already in place in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario. The United States designated a national hunting and fishing day back in 1972.

Once again, I thank the member for Northumberland—Quinte West for bringing us up to date, for giving solid recognition to these activities, and for making the public aware of just how important these activities are not only to communities in rural areas but to a number of urban areas as well. Most urban areas in this country have lakes, rivers and streams either right beside them or near them. The citizens of those communities can also take advantage of these wonderful opportunities.

Bill C-465 celebrates multiple aspects of Canadian society. It celebrates the history of the forming of our nation. It celebrates our vast and diverse natural resources. It celebrates outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship. Canada's vast and diverse natural

resources fuel the spirit of adventure in Canadians and captures the imagination of people around the world.

Who has not sat around a camp-fire when they were growing up singing *Kumbaya* or putting an arm around the shoulder of a friend, or telling stories? Most of us will never forget these memories. That comes with the privilege and the possibility of being able to hunt or fish.

Many Canadians are active outdoors because they have access to a tremendous array of outdoor recreational facilities. Fishing in particular is one of Canada's most broadly pursued activities. I have a bit of personal history with fishing that I would like to bring forward to hon. members in the House.

As a youngster I can recall leaving school, grabbing an old bamboo pole and heading down to the lake which was only about a mile and a half south. I would grab an old green line, stick it on the end of the pole, put a hook on it and on the way down to the lake overturn the stumps and the rocks and pick up a few worms or leeches which I would stick in my pocket. Down to the lake I would go. It was so exciting when I had that line in the water and a fish was enticed to grab on to it. I remember my first fish. I was so excited. I did not know what to do with it other than to take it off the hook and let it go. That fish was safe for another day.

This is almost like *déjà vu*. I was down at the lake outside my home earlier this year with my grandson and granddaughters. All of a sudden I heard the wild shriek "I've got one". They were doing the same thing that I did when I was young.

So the excitement generated from this activity to our youth and recognizing just how important it was to teach them, to show them how to do a live release, how to basically clean the fish if they wish to eat it, how to understand what it is to preserve and conserve for future generations so that perhaps down the road their children would have the same privilege was a wonderful closing of the loop to me.

It is not just a sport. It is a passion to many people. It is a source of pride for many Canadians. Certainly it can be enjoyed, and is enjoyed, by people of any age, background or ability. It is an easy way, an affordable way, for families to spend some quality time together.

It is highly lucrative, from a point of income, whether for people in the industry or actually even from different levels of government, whether it is with taxation, whether it is for permits, because each year approximately 3.2 million Canadians participate in recreational fishing and they spend \$7.5 billion per year practising this sport. It is not just a simple little recreational activity but it actually is a huge generation of dollars and levers of activity in our economy that certainly contribute a great deal to our GDP as well.

There is the other element of that. As I mentioned, this bill pertains to both hunting and fishing. Canadians naturally enjoy the actual resources when hunting. I am very fortunate. I live in an area where hunting is, in some ways, more a passion. There are some who say that when

the annual deer hunt takes place in my area it is a national holiday in Hastings county. Literally, there is hardly a male, and the ladies as well, who do not participate. It is not just what they call the thrill of the hunt. It is definitely a social activity. It is a get-together. It is a time to swap stories. It is a time to fraternize. It is a time to recognize that we have a wonderful outdoors and a great heritage that we can take advantage of, that we can utilize and that we can enjoy.

I am very fortunate. Where I am, we have white-tailed deer, elk, and moose, which continue to be associated with Canada, particularly by a lot of our international tourists or hunters who do not have any wildlife that is anywhere remotely accessible to them.

Across this country, we have such a diverse geography and such a great quantity and selection, per se, of fish. There are no less than 270 different varieties of fish. Who can resist a nice fresh bass fillet, that has been caught, filleted and fried in a pan of butter over an open fire? Really that, to me, sort of typifies exactly what fishing is.

I see my colleague across the floor. I know he is from the Nipissing area, as well,. My aunt and uncle had a camp on Lake Nipissing. I never saw anybody in my life fillet a pickerel like my aunt. I learned that as a youngster and now I am teaching my grandson and my granddaughter. And I see the number of activities that take place from this, the number of tourists we are able to gather.

My other colleague is from northern Canada where, quite obviously, it is more than just a recreation. They have an asset there that is a treasure. It is something that really is right back from the hunting, fishing and trapping days during the establishment of our country, with all of our explorers taking advantage of our natural resources. It has just played such a significant role in so many ways that it is really imperative that we do designate a special day, not just for the history, but for the reminder that this is not just our past but it is also our future and we must protect and conserve it.

Canada does enjoy an international reputation, as we all know, as a fishing and hunting mecca and anglers in Canada spend, as I mentioned, almost \$7 billion a year. It certainly is more than an important contributor to the northern area because it also provides many people with the opportunity to explore and see a part of their heritage that many of them did not even know existed.