

The Address—Mr. Reynolds

such payment is made only where the highway system links two provinces. Mr. Speaker, the province of Ontario runs a ferry service on Lake Huron. The service is subsidized by the federal government.

For years, British Columbia has felt that it has paid more than its fair share to the Canadian economy. We are one of the "have" provinces and we do not mind paying more than our share. Also, we are the fastest-growing province. After arriving in British Columbia many of us do not like to leave, because the weather is better there than it is back east.

● (1430)

The Conservative and New Democratic Party members from the province of British Columbia had a meeting with the Premier of British Columbia a short two weeks ago. The Liberal members said they could not attend the first meeting. I will accept that. I am usually naive about these things. I hope they will come to the next meeting because the first one was very productive.

The premier provided us with figures which showed that Canadian National Railways is receiving great benefit from the federal treasury for its ferries. In 1973, CNR received \$44.6 million to operate their ferries on the east coast of this country. British Columbia will lose \$20 million in the operation of their ferry service this year. Much of that \$20 million loss will be spent on servicing tourists coming into British Columbia. Tourism is our number one resource. The province fills up with tourists in the summer. Anyone who has been there and has tried to cross using the ferry system knows it takes a few hours to get to the island.

I keep raising the subject of the meeting the Conservative and NDP members had with the Premier of British Columbia. We feel the federal government should sit down with British Columbia to work out an agreement whereby the B.C. Trans-Canada Highway will really become part of the Trans-Canada Highway and be paid for by all the people of Canada.

Another topic discussed at that meeting with our premier, and quite an important one, involved the supertankers that will be coming down the west coast. All British Columbians are concerned about this. In the last session, all members of this House were concerned about it, because we passed a motion to tell the United States government we were concerned. The Premier of British Columbia sent a note to this government on March 13, 1973, with regard to a program called The Way Out. Everyone in my party does not necessarily agree with our premier that this is the best way to solve the supertanker problem, but it is certainly a way out over what we will have to put up with. At that meeting we were told the federal government had not replied to the premier's letter, and a follow-up letter was sent.

I think it is shameful that this government did not answer the provincial government on a matter as important as supertankers travelling down the coast of British Columbia. If I replied to letters from my constituents as fast as this government is replying to the province of British Columbia, I do not think I would have been re-elected.

[Mr. Reynolds.]

I think these two matters point out one of the problems we face in British Columbia. We are a rich province, a "have" province. We have great lakes, great oceans, great weather and great people who come from all across Canada. It seems the federal government knows it is great there. They feel this is one part of the country they really do not have to bother too much about because it is so well off. However, the people of my province are frustrated by some of the federal programs. This is obvious by the number of people they have returned to this House. Some Liberals feel there has been an increase. I am certainly happy to see these Liberals here, because my philosophy is opposed to socialism. Any time eight Liberals beat eight NDP members, it makes me happy. However, those eight federal Liberals may not have come here had it not been for the fact the NDP are doing so well in British Columbia.

I want to talk a little about the British Columbia penitentiary. This is an area in which I have been quite interested since I became involved in politics. I visited that penitentiary some two weeks ago. We caused quite a stir by saying that we thought 20 pounds of heroin was missing. I would like to explain why we said we thought it was missing. In March of last year I put a question on the order paper of this House asking why a gentleman in British Columbia had charges against him dropped after he had been arrested with 20 pounds of heroin in his car. Where had that 20 pounds of heroin gone?

From March of last year until two weeks ago I could not get an answer from this government, even with repeated phone calls and questions on the order paper. On a regular visit to the penitentiary I talked to some heroin traffickers who had been on the street at the time of the arrest. They are now spending their days confined to the B.C. pen. They told me that quite often some of this evidence worked its way back out of the hold-up or was missing, and it was common practice for the drug squad to use heroin to get information from addicts. I indicated to reporters that possibly this was the reason the charges were stayed but I would not know until I got an answer. The commissioner of the RCMP could not get an answer that evening. The next morning he said, "Yes, we have the heroin." It seemed that the question was answered.

I still want to ask this government why the gentleman arrested was not charged, or the charges against him were dropped, and why they could not answer my question in all that time. Heroin creates a very serious problem in British Columbia. The majority of the inmates of the British Columbia penitentiary are there on drug or drug related charges. During the election I attended a seminar at the British Columbia penitentiary. I was the only member of parliament from British Columbia who took the time to attend. The police, heroin addicts, their friends and many others were there.

The police estimate that in the lower mainland alone there are 6,500 addicts and their habit costs them \$325,000 a day. The addicts in the pen tell us that it is more like 15,000 addicts, at a cost of \$1 million a day. The police do not deny this figure. They say their figures are accurate. The police know there are 6,500, but they do not deny there are as many as 15,000 addicts in the province of British Columbia.