

The Address

I know that officials of the Halifax-Dartmouth Port Commission are in this city today and will be meeting with the Atlantic caucus of the Conservative Party—and I am sure with others—to impress upon it the absolutely desperate need that we have for the maintenance of that line as a first-class line, as well as for the implementation of new technology that will reduce the costs of using that line, thereby making it much more likely that the Port of Halifax will effectively compete with American ports like Philadelphia, Baltimore and New York.

A third area in which transportation is essential and for which funding is required has to do with port infrastructure. Of course the sea has always been integral to the economic survival of Nova Scotia. Within my own constituency of South Shore, I have a number of ports designated as Department of Transport ports as distinct from Department of Fisheries and Oceans ones. I found regrettable the lack of capital funding available to the federal Department of Transport for port development. In particular, I would like to speak about the port of Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

Over two and a half years ago, the Harbour Development Committee of the Queen's Liverpool Development Commission developed a feasibility study for the building of a new channel that would bring the port of Liverpool to life again. Three major industries are integral to Queen's County: Bowater Mersey Paper Company, Steel and Engine Products and Mersey Seafoods that are highly dependent on being able to bring larger ships into port than was the case many years ago when those businesses first began. We are talking about a major project. We are talking about a \$15 million project.

There is money available from ACOA which recognizes the economic development value of that project. Similarly, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, through its Small Craft Harbour Program, recognizes the potential of it. Indeed, I might say that the province is prepared to talk with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources about allocating some funding from the offshore oil and gas fund. The lead is the Department of Transport, but the Department of Transport cannot proceed unless it has capital funds.

I could go on and speak about the dredging that is needed in Lunenburg, about the dredging that would make a channel and enable Bridgewater to become a

viable port or about the needs for a new docking facility in the town of Shelburne. But I believe the point is made that funds have to be made available for transportation infrastructure in our marine areas if Atlantic Canada is to have the opportunity to grow as it should.

We understand that times change. Prior to Confederation, the trading patterns for over 200 years in which Nova Scotia was involved were north and south between Nova Scotia and New England and down the coast. Confederation and the national policy of Sir John A. Macdonald in the late 1870s and 1880s changed that by setting up tariff walls which enabled the development of essentially a branch plant economy relationship between the United States and central Canada. We in turn were subcolonialized in the maritimes. With the re-establishment of trade north and south, as opposed to east and west, we have to catch up to where we were 100 years ago to re-establish our trading links.

Therefore, I am saying that the government must recognize that not only are we a political federation but effectively we are an economic federation. We have to recreate or establish, for the first time perhaps, a level playing field in terms of the basis upon which we as Atlantic Canadians can compete effectively within the Canadian market, let alone take full advantage of the opportunities that exist with the free trade agreement with the United States, whether on a full North American basis or not.

I read in the Speech from the Throne reference to the breaking down of barriers to trade among the provinces of Canada. This is an obvious and a necessary and important step. It makes sense in theory, but as a Nova Scotian I must be frank and say that it causes me a certain amount of fear. I am not sure that the state of the transportation infrastructure enables us to compete effectively with the larger industries of Ontario and Quebec. Therefore, I trust and hope that as the government develops specific programs to make progress toward those goals, it will take cognizance of the needs of Atlantic Canada.

The second major economic area I hope the government will recognize is the long-standing practice in this country is to recognize that federal as well as provincial expenditures can play an important role toward economic development. Co-operative agreements, of course, have been very effective vehicles, but there must be