

Trans-Canada Highway

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order, please. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works.

Mr. Graftey: This increases the cynicism of the public toward parliament. It is a disgrace.

Mr. Stewart: During the 1930's at a time when the government of Canada was giving assistance to highway construction through "make work" programs and for a period after the second world war, many so-called "major" highways were built, not only to serve vehicles but also to service the immediately adjacent land. Generally these roads were located so as to pass through the central part of each town or city. Consequently, what has come to be called "strip development" occurred on each side of these highways, particularly those adjacent to urban areas or to what the hon member for Gaspé has called "settled areas".

As vehicular traffic and strip development increased, these roads became overcongested and no longer had the capacity to move traffic in sufficient volumes or at adequate speeds. As this happened, new roads were required. These were built away from the older highways and in many cases they bypassed urban centres and the strip development areas. These new highways are what are called arterials or freeways. On these highways traffic movement is the primary consideration, with local access a secondary consideration. Building development along the arterials is either prohibited or discouraged.

In the case of freeways passing through built-up areas and arterials passing through areas where land access to the road is required, service roads paralleling the main route are now often provided. The older highways, those with the strip development, have reverted to the status of what are now known as local or collector highways.

I am saying that the thinking of the hon. member for Gaspé focuses on these local or collector highways and not on what is called an arterial. I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the trans-Canada highway can now be classified as an arterial.

Mr. Keays: Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a correction here. I was not referring to urban areas. I referred to rural areas and arterial roads to which the hon. member has referred, those roads which are built to pass through sparsely populated areas.

[Mr. Graftey.]

Mr. Stewart: The notion of an arterial road is that there should not be any secondary traffic on the right of way. That is inherent in the very nature of an arterial road. On these arterials vehicular traffic movement is of primary concern and access by people owning property or living immediately adjacent to the road is definitely secondary. Through or around heavily urbanized areas and in many rural areas where the traffic is heavy—

Mr. Graftey: Tell this to the bereaved families.

Mr. Stewart: —the trans-Canada highway is designed to freeway standards with no access to adjacent land except at regularly spaced interchanges. We have illustrations such as the Ottawa Queensway, the Winnipeg by-pass and the trans-Canada highway through the city of Montreal. I could illustrate this by reading to the hon. member a description of the Ottawa Queensway.

Mr. Keays: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, my motion refers to rural areas and this is the problem on which I should like an answer. I am not interested in urban areas, because they have limited access to the arterials of which the hon. member spoke. I am interested in rural areas and highways on the fringe of small towns.

Mr. Stewart: The trans-Canada highway is not yet completed in many of the provinces, for example, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario. Where the trans-Canada highway does pass near or through these settled areas, even though they are not incorporated towns or cities, what I am saying applies, namely, that this is a limited access highway and secondary traffic on the roadway or on the shoulders is not expected and indeed may very well be prohibited.

Therefore my argument concerning an area such as the city of Ottawa is equally apt for one of these "settled areas". It is true that there are areas wherein the trans-Canada highway was built before this arterial concept came to be fully developed. Part of the hon. member's motion would apply to such reaches of highway; this is quite true. But surely the thing to do in those areas is to provide secondary roads with adequate pedestrian paths and sidewalks and gradually to eliminate this kind of secondary traffic on the shoulders where there is no adequate protection.

The hon. gentleman said he would allow pedestrians and bicyclists to move along on the paved shoulders. I wish to submit to him