

through northern Ontario. I tried to explain to the Minister of Transport that that particular run was the third most efficient run in the whole system, and it was cut.

I asked the minister a simple question. If we consider priorities, and this was one of the most efficient runs we had, why was it cut? I suggest it was for political reasons. Because of the small population base through northern Ontario there are only two ridings, besides the two in Thunder Bay, that run all through northern Ontario, which is one-fifth of Ontario. It is much more politically wise to cut that than to cut something in downtown Montreal or downtown Toronto. The fact is that votes add up to election, and I think it is a shame for a government to run a country based on what is most politically expedient.

If the regions of Canada are to survive and to grow, we have to do something about our infrastructure. I have spoken about VIA Rail but I want to talk about transportation in general. The government takes billions of dollars out of our economies through the royalties that we give to all of Canada for development. We have heard that in New Brunswick there is a difficulty with the road system. Well, if you have ever been to northern Ontario you will know we have the worst road system in Canada. In some cases we do not have a road at all. Two-thirds of my riding has no road. A phenomenal amount of development could take place. If we were interested in creating unity, creating economic development, creating a future for Canada, the opportunity lies in those great regions of northern Canada, northern Ontario.

Yes, it costs money in the short term, but so did the railroads. We lived through that and we watched our country grow. Step two of that agenda is to move to the north. Two-thirds of our country is not even developed yet and we continue to cut and cut instead of looking with a vision of Canada to build that road to the Northwest Territories from northern Ontario in order to start to develop the mining communities and native communities up there that are isolated and have 80 per cent to 90 per cent unemployment and suicide rates seven times the national average because they cannot envision any future.

That is what we are talking about here. We are not talking about dollars and cents. We are talking about vision. The members who represent these regions are

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getting a little fed up. The Reform Party is a perfect example of that. They are getting fed up in western Canada. They have created another party because the party opposite which said for years and years that it was going to give western Canada a voice in government has become a joke. They have had to create another party and look elsewhere.

As a member of the Liberal party I am not pleased with that either, but I still think there is something wrong. People from the regions realize that we are getting short-changed.

It is time to start talking about fairness and equality. I would like to read something from the Constitution that is important to all Canadians. It says: "We, as Canadians, are in charge of promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of all Canadians and furthering economic development to reduce disparities and opportunities across our country."

I do not think anyone has read that statement in the Constitution lately, especially those members who are supposed to be in charge of representing the regions outside of the urban centres of Canada. I know it is difficult. The minister opposite is probably sitting there thinking that he has really fought hard in cabinet to try to make them understand what goes on in Atlantic Canada.

It is time, if we are true to our electorate and true to our hearts, that we do a little more than scream and yell, that we put some action into play. If it means we have to do something drastic like resign our position or sit somewhere else, then maybe we have to do that. It is high time that the regions of Canada and the potential in them begin to have more attention paid to them.

Let us take a look at the unemployment insurance changes. Nobody is particularly against changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act. However, when the changes affect regional disparities, then we have removed our mandate. We have taken away the part of the Constitution we have just discussed.

One of the biggest problems we face in this country is lay-offs in northern and Atlantic Canada, in these single industry towns with cycles of high and low unemployment because of a dependence on resource based industries. This situation results from cyclical, seasonal employment. Where do you go? The joke of it all is that they say they are going to train the living heck out of us. That is nice. It is great to be trained for something that you know you cannot get a job in because there is no