

*The Address—Mr. Balcom*

areas. Of course the federal government has decided that these strategic points are important to the whole nation.

These are times for preparedness in order to prevent total war. As King George VI said to the British people at the time of the war of 1939-45, "Everyone is in the front line in total war." Civil defence is just as much a part of total war as the army, the navy and the air force, ships, tanks, shells or guns. It is an anachronism that seeks to make any form or part of a defence system the responsibility of a collection of local authorities.

We have a national civil defence co-ordinator. Why, then, do we go on relying upon numerous local authorities to set up and conduct their own schemes under the national co-ordinator, when defence of all kinds is national in scope? We have tried piecemeal methods in connection with the old age pensions scheme, but it did not work well, and we finally went over to a wholly national scheme. And if this is desirable in the field of social services, how much more desirable—how much more imperative—is it where the very safety of the nation is involved?

Mr. Speaker, in the field of transportation, the auxiliary services are all important in attracting business. In Halifax, where transportation and related services are the very lifeblood of our business life, there are several very obvious shortcomings. They are all functions of the Canadian National Railways.

In my first speech in this house I urged extension of the Nova Scotian hotel to provide an additional 100 rooms. It is not necessary for me to point out the personal inconvenience, yes the hardships, and the restrictive effects on many kinds of business which result from inadequate hotel accommodation. I would point out that many of those seeking hotel services are patrons of the railway, of the Canadian National Steamships or the Trans-Canada Air Lines. It would surely be good business to provide adequate hotel space in order to promote the use of the travel facilities, all of which are publicly owned.

In applying the word inadequate to the Nova Scotian, I am not reflecting in any way upon the staff or the services given. The facilities are excellent as far as they go, but the hotel just has not enough guest rooms.

The story is quite different with the Canadian National baggage and express sheds which adjoin the station. These wooden buildings which were constructed about the time of the first world war are

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now inefficient and unsuitable. They are unsightly and a potential fire menace. The face-lifting job which I hope will not be put off too long should include hard-surfacing the remaining part of the square in front of these buildings.

There are, in addition, several public projects for Halifax for which the time is now ripe. The customs building has been judged beyond repair by the Department of Public Works. The plan to renovate it to meet present-day needs has been shelved, and we hope that this site will be used in the near future.

Decision on a new public building has been long pending. Now that the heavy defence construction in the area is well under way and the construction industry is no longer extended, the reasons for further postponement can no longer hold. I hope we can look for action on this matter in the immediate future.

There is another project in the Halifax area which I want to see go forward, and that is the provision of a permanent building suitable for army headquarters. Appropriate accommodation has now been provided for the navy and the air force, but the army quarters, while much improved in appearance, are still in temporary buildings.

Unfortunately, but necessarily, we have to spend public money for defence; preparedness must be a part of our national life at present and in the foreseeable future. To house army headquarters in temporary buildings is quite sensible for an emergency period when our available resources have to be carefully rationed. But with the passage of time the cost of maintaining and repairing such buildings increases. From a business standpoint it becomes uneconomic to continue on such a basis. I submit that the time has come for the provision of a suitable permanent building for the army headquarters. It will provide a nucleus for expansion should the time come, God forbid, when hasty expansion is required.

Of course, our great desire is to make Halifax the No. 1 port on the Atlantic coast, equipped with all the facilities for handling the shipping of the world—surpassing Montreal and rivalling even New York. Halifax is up and coming but we want it to go further than that—we want it to arrive!

Today, one of the most important facilities we need is a modern airport. And we are able to say that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Chevrier) has indicated that such will be established in Halifax. We only hope that it will be in the near future, for to be really