

Lawrence Seaway, and they should be given strong federal support for their ambitious growth plans. The recently announced new federal ports policy, which provides more autonomy to these ports, is a move in the right direction, provided recognition is given to the significant national economic role they play.

The success of these two ports is a somewhat mixed blessing to Atlantic region producers. While it enables Atlantic producers to obtain steamship service to many countries on a frequent basis, it does not give them an ocean freight advantage, which should be their right owing to their geographical location closer to the European market. The steamship ocean conferences have established a freight rate structure whereby ocean freight rates from a port such as Montreal are at exactly the same level as they are from Halifax and Saint John. Not only are we more remote from the central Canadian market, but we enjoy no cost advantage in dealing with most overseas markets.

Marine transportation in the coasting trade has long been an important element in maintaining Atlantic region transportation costs at a reasonable level. Competitive freight rates for such important industries as steel have been maintained through the availability of Commonwealth ships. Proposed amendments to the Canada Shipping Act, which would restrict the Atlantic region coasting trade to Canadian ships, represent a real threat to the viability of certain industries and would undoubtedly result in increased transportation costs to a region which can ill afford them.

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The ability to move people into, out of, and within the Atlantic region is an essential social and economic need. Proposals are now being considered for a local air service which will substantially improve the ability of people to move freely within the region. Access to Halifax, through a carrier other than Air Canada, could provide competition which would result in improved service into and out of the region.

Another important element in passenger transportation is the ferry services from the New England states to Nova Scotia, which annually bring in thousands of American tourists who contribute to the economy of the Atlantic provinces and assist in maintaining a more reasonable balance of payments with our southern neighbour.

Truck transportation has over a period of years become a significant element in Atlantic region transportation systems. Opportunities exist for reducing transportation costs by truck through heavier truck loadings which can be realized through joint federal-provincial highway upgrading programs, such as the one in western Canada which came about as a result of the Western Economics Opportunities Conference.

The private automobile is a very inefficient energy consumer and, with the present energy crisis, there must be federal-provincial initiatives to discourage its use. This can be accomplished by encouraging the use of bus and/or rail, and substantially improved urban transit systems.

While the Atlantic region has come a long way, the transportation problem of distance to our principal markets is still very much with us and, as recognized by previous governments, is and should continue to be one of national concern.

Another vital issue to the Atlantic provinces is the 200-mile offshore limit in relation to fisheries, a resource that plays an important role in the overall economy of Nova Scotia. I am sure all Nova Scotians, and indeed all Canadians, were delighted with the announcement by the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen last June of the federal government's decision to extend the fisheries jurisdiction of Canada out to the 200-mile limit from the coast, effective January 1, 1977. It was certainly gratifying to hear reference to this in the Throne Speech. While this action was and is welcomed by our fishing industry, it does not come any too soon. Fish stocks have been and are being depleted to such an extent that before very much longer the commercial significance of the resource will be questionable at best, and many fishermen in the Atlantic provinces were beginning to feel as endangered a species as the fish they so ardently pursue.

With proper conservation and management measures in force, the Atlantic region of Canada can once again become the fishing resource that will see all our processing plants working to capacity and, at the same time, ensure that our people obtain optimum benefits from the sea resources off our coast.

Bilateral agreements with such fishing powers as Norway, Poland, the U.S.S.R., Spain, Portugal and Japan by Canada must provide for the effective protection and rebuilding of our fish stocks. Enforcement of this 200-mile limit through air and sea reconnaissance is also a vital factor in our economy, involving as it does increased activity of Maritime Command, Department of Transport vessels and the Fisheries and Marine Service Branch of Environment Canada.

I would now like to touch briefly on something I mentioned at the outset of my remarks—strikes and the disturbing frequency with which they occur. Surely Canada and its labour movement has something to learn from the strike-riddled experience of a country such as Britain, whose economy today is in such dire straits. The labour movement in Canada has come a long way over the past number of years. However, I fear that the time is fast approaching, if it has not already arrived, when labour, management and government should make every effort to pull together rather than apart at the expense of all Canadians.

We live in a great country, rich in resources and opportunities, but nevertheless I am fearful that unless there is a rapid change in attitude investment—and I am referring to equity investment—will dry up and the door close on many opportunities. As a young, growing nation we can ill afford the bad reputation being earned as a result of the frequency and long duration of many recent strikes.

Nova Scotia has and is paying the price of poor labour management relations, and a number of much needed investment and development opportunities have passed us by. My