

Government Orders

I want to let you in on a secret. I know this project is dumb. I know there are politics involved and I know they are seeking votes, but there are no votes for this government in England. Those members have not even figured that out. There are no votes for this government in the United States. They have not figured that out either.

If you are going to sell out, if you are going to do something for political reasons, at least do it where you will get some votes. You are insulting the integrity of the traditional honour of buying votes by going offshore. You are buying votes in Britain and the United States. That is dumb.

Now for the Liberals, why are they agreeing with this? Do they think they are going to get votes out of it? They already have seats in P.E.I. What are they going to get out of it? Are they going to say: "Look at us. We have an edifice complex. We helped build this bridge. We can have our name on a bronze plaque" right at the level where the sea salt water will erode the quickest, we hope.

There will be all the sitting members of Parliament cemented into this bridge. There they are for posterity, every one of them. Do you know what? They are hoping that everybody in P.E.I. will come, look at their names on the bridge and say: "Mmm, I am going to vote for that guy".

They are insulting the people of P.E.I. They are insulting the people of New Brunswick and they are insulting the rest of us Canadians. I thought this kind of pork-barrel politics was over.

Mrs. Dobbie: What do you suggest?

Mr. Barrett: I suggest that if you can find an extra \$21 million a year, you can start spending on people who are hungry.

Spend it on kids who can go to school and have a hot meal inside their stomachs. Spend it on the education of people in P.E.I. Spend \$42 million a year on university and technical schools in the maritimes. Upgrade those schools that you blab about over there all the time.

Spend money for the seniors. Spend money for the pioneers who built this country, but not \$42 million a year to provide some offshore corporations with money that they can profit from to save \$21 million a year.

What do I suggest? I will tell you what I suggest. Your mathematics are stupid. The project does not make sense. Also, anybody who gets up in this House and supports it by saying: "We can solve a \$21 million a year problem by spending \$42 million" needs their head examined by the Auditor General.

I challenge this government and the opposition to call in the Auditor General and have him do a study of this. I challenge them to say the Auditor General can show how you can save \$21 million a year by spending \$42 million a year.

It is the same kind of mentality as spending all that money on Hibernia to provide the Americans with offshore oil. Even the ships and the infrastructure for Hibernia are being built offshore. I do not understand it. If it is good politics, then let the people of New Brunswick and Newfoundland decide if they want the money directly in their pockets. Do they think it should be diverted through the consortium that is owned in Britain and the United States?

What are the economic impact studies? Who has done them? What of the environmental studies? Many more need to be done. What about the way of life on Prince Edward Island being the same as British Columbia? We have Vancouver Island. Do you want to spend \$45 million a year to solve our ferry problems? You have not given the province of British Columbia one single penny to pay for transportation between the mainland and Victoria, not one penny.

Since W.A.C. Bennett brought in the ferry system between Vancouver Island and the mainland, not one cent of Canadian taxpayers' dollars has gone to help British Columbia's need for intercoastal ferries, not one penny. Those ferries are built in B.C. by B.C. workers in union shops. They are not on strike.

I am not here to lament the failures of past Liberal and Tory governments. I want to put that on record but how can you keep that up and deny the rest of the Canadian people an option for the same money? Is it politics? It is stupidity, absolute stupidity.

• (1550)

I challenge every single Tory cabinet minister who holds a seat from Manitoba west to come on a public platform with me and justify this project financially in western Canada.