

The Address

[English]

He was a warm man. He was a man who was gregarious and friendly, as my colleague indicated, and yet he was also an intensely private human being.

I mourn his loss. I am sure all Canadians mourn his loss. We feel a sense of pain at his premature death. We know that he could have contributed and would have contributed a great deal to the debate which is going on in the country at this time, not only with respect to national unity in terms of New Brunswick but also with respect to the particular contribution of aboriginal nations.

I want to join in saying farewell and paying tribute to this decent man, a friend, and to join in extending my sympathy and respect to his family and to his loved ones.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Pronovost for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session; and amendment thereto of Mr. Chrétien (p. 24) and on the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Langdon (p. 33).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Resuming debate. The hon. member for South Shore has 12 minutes left for his speech.

Mr. Peter L. McCreath (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up where I left off.

I was talking about the economic needs of Atlantic Canada in general and Nova Scotia in particular. I would like to set forth for the House a number of particular and specific needs.

I think we have in the throne speech some very excellent, general ideas as to the direction in which the country should go. However, I would like to now, if I may, offer some assistance to the government in making

some specific suggestions of things that I think we need in Nova Scotia.

They really come into two categories. The first and foremost has to do with our need for transportation infrastructure which is absolutely essential for economic development.

Given our location *vis-à-vis* the rest of the country and the United States, transportation is a key to our economic survival, let alone development. There are three areas in which I think that there is a particular need. The first relates to the state of our highways. I realize that highways are a provincial jurisdiction normally and that the expectation is that the provinces are supposed to provide for them. However, the fact of the matter is that none of our provinces are overburdened with financial resources at the present time nor have they ever been. I know there was precedent with respect to the building of the Trans-Canada Highway many years ago.

• (1520)

Therefore, I would like to urge the government to consider seriously, over the course of the next three or four years, setting aside the funds to make possible a renewal of that highway system, certainly at the very least the quadra-laning of the Trans-Canada Highway. I would like to see the quadra-laning of Highway 103 and the completion of the all-weather system in Nova Scotia. This would contribute tremendously to our ability to participate in the opportunities provided not only in the free trade agreement with the United States, but indeed in the breaking down of barriers for trade within Canada.

A second area that is absolutely essential to our needs has to do with the rail line, what used to be called the Intercolonial Railway. As I mentioned earlier in my remarks, Nova Scotians were not overwhelmed with enthusiasm for joining Confederation. However, one of the sweeteners offered to us, both at the time before Confederation occurred and after, was the assurance that the Intercolonial Railway would be the link that made it possible for us to participate economically in this new nation.

It is sad to say that the state of that railway is not a great deal better today than it was following its completion in the 1860s. We are very unhappy and unsatisfied with the degree of attention provided that railway by the Canadian National Railway system.