

*Adjournment Debate*

feasibility study done to determine the viability of a rural-urban bus service performing this function, and to identify possible routes in New Brunswick.

If I had to put my finger on one thing that the Government of Canada could invest in to improve employment opportunities in New Brunswick and the other maritime provinces, I would put my finger on transportation. I would recommend to the minister that transportation be regarded as a development tool in all the Atlantic provinces, and that in applying this principle they look at air transportation, and all weather highways—a comprehensive, modern transportation system that should be put in place in the Atlantic provinces by the Government of Canada as an investment in the economic development of that region. Vast improvements in the quality, scope, and performance of public transportation is essential in all parts of New Brunswick.

The programs of LIP, Canada Works, and Young Canada Works have their functions as labour absorbents for a short term application. They do not and are not intended to go to the root of our economic problems. I suggest, however, that the Department of Manpower might play a great role in identifying—as I have attempted to do in my remarks—the root causes of unemployment, and in recommending to appropriate branches of government at all levels the necessary strategy to deal with these problems.

In my view, the proper vehicle for mounting a meaningful attack on the disparities that exist in the Atlantic provinces is a federal-provincial conference convened by the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) and the premiers of the respective provinces, and if we are to carry out the strategy they propose and focus the attention of all departments of government on the problem, the ultimate answer will require the personal direction and dedication of the Prime Minister of Canada.

**Mr. Bob Kaplan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have been interested to listen to the observations of the hon. member from Fredericton concerning problems in the economy of his region, and I want to touch on two particular issues. A number of members opposite have lately been comparing statistics from states in the U.S., with statistics in Canada. I think we have to be very cautious in trying to make comparisons on that basis. Since other members have made similar observations, I have taken the trouble to look into the way in which American states arrive at their statistics. Of course I have not looked at all states, but I chose Maine since it is one the hon. member planned to refer to today.

I would argue that no valid comparisons can be made on the basis of statistics gathered in our jurisdiction and those in that state. We have regional statistics which are prepared by Statistics Canada. In the case of unemployment the statistics are prepared by our Department of Labour. These statistics are prepared by a vast household survey which is accurate.

I noted the hon. member's suggestion that statistics be made on a constituency basis as well. Although interesting, it does

[Mr. Howie.]

present problems. The boundaries of constituencies change every few years and comparisons over a period of time would be distorted by that fact. There are rather more constant geographic units which are set regionally, but on balance I think it would be desirable to continue to use the more durable geographic grid than use the constituency basis.

In the State of Maine unemployment statistics are prepared through the unemployment insurance administration. They are generalized from the number of people who apply for unemployment insurance, making some assumptions and using some factors that are obtained from national surveys. In other words, it is a much more indirect and, I would argue, not nearly as accurate a way of making analyses of unemployment in the State of Maine as is used in Canada. Certainly the base is very different, and it has been observed by others more knowledgeable about the two jurisdictions than I that it would be hard to argue which of the two has a higher level of unemployment. One thing that is clear is that the State of Maine has a very different industrial base and structure from New Brunswick.

The hon. member noted a lot of problems and made some suggestions for developing the regional economy of New Brunswick. I know he is aware that DREE is directed toward that, and many of its programs, which he knows better than I, are designed to develop the economy of New Brunswick and to put it on a better footing.

But it is not only DREE that is trying to expand and improve the economy of New Brunswick at the level of the federal government. There are also the budgets of the federal government, in particular the last budget which extended the accelerated capital cost allowance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. I regret to inform the parliamentary secretary that the time allotted to him has expired.

FINANCE—PROPOSED FORMATION OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION TO ACQUIRE GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST IN CROWN CORPORATIONS

**Mr. Bill Clarke (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I hope that my contributions to the debate today will indicate the lack of true free enterprise thought on the part of the government.

My comments arise out of a question that I asked of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) on June 10. I wanted to know when the Government of Canada might consider following the lead of the government of British Columbia in forming an investment corporation into which it could sell or fold its investments in the Crown enterprises being carried on in Canada today. I submit that the difference is that the government of B.C. inherited the assets it is proposing to put into this corporation from the former socialist government in that province, whereas in the case of the Government of Canada it has made a small attempt at forming such a corporation but it is selling or putting in assets that it acquired or created itself by intrusion into the private sector.