

The Address—Mr. Bell

port, including Churchill, has a right to demand the same facilities. The same applies to flooding, if it is carried to the extreme. We, on the Saint John river have experienced considerable damage from flooding every spring, and we would be in a position to demand icebreaking flood control there, the same as people on the St. Lawrence, if this damage is as serious as it is made out to be. The simple answer to deal fairly with this problem is, as I have said, to assess the cost against the users of this icebreaker service.

The second solution lies in assisting or subsidizing the freight that moves overland to and from Halifax and Saint John. It has been argued that there is an advantage of \$12 a ton in shipping through Montreal rather than the maritimes. If this is true, then it is mainly due to the complex freight rate structure built up in Canada since early railway days. As a layman I am not going to try to unravel the rates, but let us take a percentage of the advantage St. Lawrence ports claim and apply it in the form of this assistance.

Mr. Speaker, may I quote from a brief that the longshoremen made public last year with respect to this matter. This is from men who for generations have been in the stevedoring business. Their local in Saint John has around 5,000 members and is one of the largest unions in the maritimes. They are the ones who would be affected, and make no mistake about it. They stated:

Due to the complicated nature of the modern ocean-land transportation system, and the very powerful political and economic issues involved, many of which will be in violent conflict, such a policy will not be easy to find. Possibly the answer lies in calculating the expenditure now being made by the federal government on winter navigation, in all its phases, in the gulf and on the river, and in paying an equivalent sum as a rail freight subsidy on export and import traffic moving through Halifax and Saint John in the winter months. Whatever the answer, this problem is of critical importance to the ports and cities of Halifax and Saint John, and indeed, to the whole economy of the maritime provinces, both present and future.

Here is the challenge to the new Minister of Transport. It is one of his biggest problems in a complicated and heavy portfolio. As I have said, I think it is good that we have a representative from the maritimes in this ministry. I intend to support him in any moves he makes that will be of benefit to the maritimes. At the same time I intend to keep after him on this matter that looms so large to us. We hope he will solve this problem, and bring forward a positive new deal that will compensate us for the losses in our economy. He will get credit for it if he does this.

Mr. Speaker, I have another matter which I would like to mention under the heading of

the capital centennial grants. I do not know why it is that every time the federal government, through its great beneficence, give a matching grant to New Brunswick they seem to make a mess of it. Two years ago we had a serious problem under the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act. New Brunswick did not choose to change its provincial legislation, so Saint John was thus not able to expand its very nice vocational school. We now have a situation where it seems to be very indefinite what share the municipalities in New Brunswick are going to receive under the \$5 million extra granted to that province last year.

I do not know the reason for this, but two thoughts come to my mind. The first is that New Brunswick is more bankrupt than they say they are, and the second is that they are playing more politics than appears on the surface. In this connection I go back to the statement made by the former president of the privy council in a press release on January 8, 1964, and these are the significant parts of it:

The capital works would be almost exclusively of a cultural character which would give a clear relevance to the current problems of confederation which basically centre on cultural questions—"It is possible," Mr. Lamontagne pointed out, "that in British Columbia and New Brunswick, the provincial governments might wish to have the centres in Vancouver and Saint John."

Then there were questions asked in the house by the hon. member for Royal (Mr. Fairweather) and myself, and after most of the other provinces had decided how their centennial grants were to be spent the premier of New Brunswick's decision was that an office building, a common, ordinary office building in Fredericton that had been decided upon many months before, was to be considered New Brunswick's cultural building for confederation.

These questions were asked. The people of Saint John and elsewhere in the province have been writing to the Secretary of State, and he has answered them. I do not have his exact answer here, but his letter is quoted in the *Telegraph-Journal* of Saturday, February 22. I will not read it. It merely adds the word "preferably" in two instances to his former statement. All I can say is that the Secretary of State, in order to meet the whims of the premier of New Brunswick, has stuck in the word "preferably".

I am not prepared to say whether Saint John should have this centennial grant. I am the member from the Saint John area, and I hope we will get the grant or another one that might be made to the municipality. But I do challenge the right of the premier of New Brunswick to take this money that is intended