

To pass to something else, the speech from the throne is also the perfect time for members of the house to make representations on behalf of their respective ridings.

Today, I would like to bring to the attention of the proper authorities three definite and concrete suggestions to improve railway and highway transportation in our area.

The population of the riding of Restigouche-Madawaska has very poor railway passenger service. It is practically unbelievable that the city of Edmundston with 14,000 people and the riding of Restigouche-Madawaska with 39,000 are served only two or three times a week in winter, and not at all the rest of the year. It is an abnormal situation which I have discussed several times with the proper authorities.

The answer I get is that the main lines must first be provided with attractive and profitable service and that the C.N.R. will then look after secondary lines. We are asked to be patient in the meantime. The population of that area has been patient long enough and now demands a solution.

● (2:40 p.m.)

Here is the solution I propose: That the Moncton-Edmundston line of the C.N.R. be connected with the Edmundston-Levis line, and that adequate passenger service, including sleeping cars and dining cars be provided on the new Moncton-Edmundston-Levis line.

Even if this new service were to operate only two or three times a week at the outset, that would be quite acceptable. And, as it would grow in popularity, a daily service would become profitable. In reply to this very reasonable suggestion, the C.N.R. persists in saying the line would not pay for itself. There are two replies to that argument.

First of all, inasmuch as the people of this area pay taxes just as other Canadians do, it is unfair to force them to contribute to the replenishment and financing of the Canadian National elsewhere in this country when they do not benefit therefrom.

In the second place, this railway line, if it is not profitable as far as passenger traffic is concerned—which remains to be proved—is surely profitable with regard to freight services, since this line is used almost exclusively by freight trains heading for the Atlantic coast.

As far as highway transportation is concerned, they are talking about building a new road between Halifax and Sherbrooke in Quebec. This proposed route, better known as

the Corridor Road, would bypass completely the northern section of New Brunswick and would go through the state of Maine. This does not strike us as being an ideal solution to our highway problems.

It would seem preferable to go further north, which would have the advantage of including Moncton, Renous, Edmundston, St. Francis and, lastly, Sherbrooke. This route would include several already established roads, it would serve more centres and it would not isolate the north of the province of New Brunswick. This proposal should be further examined at a time when competent authorities are considering tomorrow's road building projects.

To continue in the field of new road, I must reiterate my request for a secondary section of the Trans-Canada highway in our region. This second section should complete the network under construction by linking Rivière du Loup to Moncton, through the Matapedia valley and Restigouche county. Increasing traffic makes the present road inadequate within that network. I should like to add a protest to these three recommendations for improving the present situation. The people of my town of Campbellton strongly disapprove of the Canadian National's decision to transfer the maintenance of diesel engines to Moncton.

I have been assured by C.N.R. officials that efficiency and economy make this step necessary and that only ten employees will be affected. However, this decision should not lead to a dismemberment of our railway centre for the people would not accept it.

Above all, C.N.R. officials should provide new jobs in other departments in Campbellton.

[English]

In concluding my remarks I should like to make a modest contribution to the great question now occupying the minds of many Canadians, the question of national unity. I live in a province which has had to face its share of problems in that field. It is surprising, however, how many of these problems have gradually been solved through a daily dosage of mutual understanding and plain common sense. The fact that a young man from the Acadian minority was elected premier of the province is not necessarily conclusive evidence that we live in a Canadian bilingual paradise but it is a clear indication that we have gone a long way toward national unity.