

*Government Orders*

I understand some of the debate going on, having good friends from P.E.I. and there are members from P.E.I. in the House. No one will really know until if and when it is ever built how it is going to change the character of the Island.

As far as I am concerned—not being a native of the Island it may be a little easier for me to say—but I do resent some of the remarks made by the hon. member from Hillsborough whom I do respect. I do resent some of his remarks that members not from Atlantic Canada who raise questions in the House of Commons perhaps do not have the right to raise those questions. They have that right by the very fact that it is a bill before the House of Commons. It involves members from across the country and it involves the taxpayers of Canada.

One of the biggest shams of this bill is the business and charade that it is not going to cost the taxpayers any money. That is absolutely patently false. If the government had come clean on this public relations aspect of this bill many moons ago perhaps I would not feel quite as compelled to give another viewpoint from Atlantic Canada that it is not all peaches and cream in Atlantic Canada. I am not going to talk any more about the sociological aspects.

I used to practise law in British Columbia. I have a couple of children living there now. People may wonder why my friend from Cariboo—Chilcotin in British Columbia is pushing the fixed link, other than the fact that he is the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Public Works.

That member knows as anyone who lives in British Columbia knows, when you start to talk about the economics of links there is a lot more. This is coming from a person from Atlantic Canada where perhaps I might be criticized a little. However, there is a lot more economic sense in developing some of the plans to link the mainland of B.C. with Vancouver Island which is a high growth area of Canada than the sterile fixed link in an area that does not have as much growth.

I give full credit to the members who spoke from Hillsborough, Egmont and Cumberland—Colchester—a colleague of mine from Nova Scotia who has been doing a great job from his point of view—in making sure the

fixed link comes forward and gets into the House and through the House into creation.

I point out to all those people, especially to my friend from Cariboo—Chilcotin who was not here at the time, that there is another sham around here. It is not just the sham in dollars that every taxpayer has the right to ask about. The member from Hillsborough should not complain that members have raised questions about the fixed link because taxpayers are involved.

• (1110)

There is a great shell game on the cost of the subsidy that is supposed to pay for the bridge. Even the studies the hon. member for Cariboo—Chilcotin mentioned show the big difference between the subsidy actually being paid out and the subsidy being computed to help Strait Crossing build the bridge, supposedly without any taxpayers' dollars.

Mention was made of the ferry workers and where they are going to fit into it. Well, we can talk about other aspects of this matter in terms of the fish stocks and the fish beds that are going to be affected but there is another sham here.

One of the times the matter of the fixed link was on the floor of the House and had a little flurry of activity was back in the sixties. There is a member from Moncton here whose mother was the member from Moncton and has a gold-plated shovel. Perhaps it is appropriate to have a shovel when talking about the fixed link. However she actually helped dig the foundation of the causeway around Moncton. All the studies up until that time had the causeway as the answer to join up P.E.I.

You can go to Moncton today. You can travel down there in the summertime. You can go over on the ferry. You might have to wait a while, but at least you have the character of an island. You will not get this Coney Island fixed link where people are going to build their substations and their offices on the mainland, scoot over to the island, do their little business and then scoot off.

Anne of Green Gables is going to become the ghost of Cavendish beach if this fixed link goes through. Even the Japanese will not be hoodwinked into visiting the character of the Island and staying a few days and making—