

Now, their location on the seagirt shore of the eastern part of Canada is not an advantage. It is often a disadvantage. As the hon. member for St. John's West says, it seems that, being the tag end of the transportation line, things cost more in our provinces. All the economic indices find us at the bottom. I refer to such things as unemployment and high wages. But in things that should be lower, such as the cost of living we are at the top. Sometimes Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland have competed in those two dreary and soul-destroying economic indices, the high cost of living and the low rate of wages. So, transportation aid must be used as an amelioration for their problems. Freight rate increases in recent years have had the opposite effect.

The kind of thing the member has suggested in this motion would be of some help to our people. I am amazed that the government supporter who just sat down has worked out that it would be unhelpful for our provinces and the people of Canada if there were lower rates on the ferries connecting the islands with the mainland.

Surely it was the belief of those who formed Confederation that the joining groups would share economic advantages and economic disadvantages. National policies are made to take into consideration regional disparities. How logical, how reasonable, and how sensible is it to say that there will be free interprovincial movement unless you happen to live in Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland?

● (1820)

No one has to pay \$5 to go from Ontario to Quebec. There is no collecting agency on the border of Manitoba and Saskatchewan soaking those people \$5 or \$10 every time they go to the other province. But try getting off Prince Edward Island without paying for it, try getting off Newfoundland without paying for it, or try getting on.

An hon. Member: How about Vancouver?

Mr. Macquarrie: The hon. member mentions Vancouver. I will not talk about intra provincial transportation but interprovincial.

This is the iniquity. This is the thing that should be faced. Indeed, instead of having the presumption to increase the cost of taking automobiles and people from province to province, from our island to the mainland and back, a move should be taken to abolish such tolls. The people of Charlottetown, the people of St. John's, the people of Port aux Basques, should just as truly benefit from the trans-Canada highway as those who live in those provinces which do not have the good fortune to be islands.

However, I do not want to get into the area of psychic satisfaction and psychic income, because we are often told in our part of the country that we do not really need these hard and important economic gains because life is so beautiful in the psychic sense. All of that is true. These are two beautiful provinces that we are discussing and I cherish them both, particularly the one of my birth. But I do not find that the Bank of Nova Scotia in Charlottetown is any more susceptible to being paid in psychic funds than its branches in Ontario or Quebec.

Newfoundland Ferry Service

In other words, the people in the beautiful part of the land have also to compete in the hard currencies of today's real world, and I believe that in zeroing in on one of the deterrents to the prosperous self expansion of our own economy, namely transportation, my colleague, the hon. member for St. John's West, has struck the right note. He struck it clearly and strongly, and I hope that my friend, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. McIsaac), who himself is an islander and therefore is one step ahead in the comprehension of all these problems, will relate it to the minister, and that before too long we will have a real look at these bottlenecks. Indeed, it is bad enough to give us a bottleneck, but to make us pay for it in increasingly heavy doses is, in the vernacular which I rarely use, laying it on a bit thick.

So I am enthusiastically in support of this motion, and I commend it to the government. I know it is not interested in such political things at this stage of the game, the last election being so near behind and the next one so far ahead, but if it wants to win friends and influence people in our part of the country, even though that may be disastrous to some of us personally, I would suggest that the very first recipe for it to learn and to put into effect would be to take some curative action on our transportation problems, one of which was so eloquently described by my colleague today.

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Madam Speaker, I rise to add a few words of support for this motion which was presented by my colleague and so eloquently supported by my other colleague on this side of the House. One of the reasons is that I would find it unfortunate if the first apologist for the government should feel he can go off for the weekend now that the government which he supports is the best of all possible governments, and has done everything possible for people in all parts of this country.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. To begin with, I am not an apologist for the government, and secondly, I have never suggested that we have the best of all possible worlds. If the hon. member had listened, he would have known that I enumerated the numerous problems with which we have to deal. My point was that this motion does not deal with them but simply creates another disparity.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): I accept the reprimand, it being Friday afternoon. But I think he should be reminded, at least once again this week, because we have been reminding the government side of it, that there are areas in this country which have been neglected. It is being done now. Someone mentioned the west coast a few minutes ago and the trans-Canada highway. Some people in this chamber may not realize that mile zero on the trans-Canada highway is in the riding of my colleague, the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon), and that it passes through my riding on its way to Nanaimo.

Then there is a great gap in this magnificent trans-Canada highway which joins the island on the west coast to the island on the east coast. Mile zero is on the west coast. But the gap there has to be filled by a ferry. Now, the construction of that ferry from the west to the east coast was done with funds provided in part by the prov-