

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly will not take offence at the remarks about new and old. My compatriot, being a contemporary, seems as well preserved as I am.

The thing that disturbs me about the government's measure and certainly not the minister, is the example not just of airports but also of small craft harbours. The Conservative government recruited an organization, a consulting firm, to try and find a mechanism so that it can abandon all the small craft harbours on the coast of British Columbia. How could it get these into the private sector? How could it get rid of its responsibilities for operating costs and capital funds? I point out to the hon. member how serious this is. Those are the highways for all those communities along the coast, whether we are talking about the sunshine coast, Sechelt, Gibsons, Powell River, and areas that are extremely concerned that the cost of running the transportation system is being abandoned by the federal government and being placed on the local community which cannot afford them. The local economies will simply wither and die. Ultimately, we will see the greater concentration of people moving out of those areas and irreparably harmed.

The minister is certainly not responsible for small craft harbours but he is for the harbours and for the airports. I would point out that the government is not the author of this proposal. It was the hon. member's party, not six or seven years ago, that was standing in this House proposing the same thing. The government just happens, fortuitously or unfortuitously, to find itself bringing this into play.

Perhaps the hon. member could comment on the role of the Liberal Party in initiating these activities, and your co-operation and partnership with the Conservative Party who actually bring them to fruition. It is a strange conundrum that I do not quite understand.

**Mrs. Catterall:** I should point out to the member, first of all, that he forgot Roberts Creek. I know some people on the B.C. coast who would be quite insulted by that.

I think the member is truly testing me if he expects me to have a crystal ball to remember things that happened when I was not here. Either that or he has, as my House leader is telling me, a very vivid imagination and is creating something that never happened at all. I certainly

do not intend to personally, or on behalf of my party, take responsibility for the bill that is before us today, tabled by the Minister of Transport in a government that Canadians simply are not going to trust to privatize anything because they know the results of its privatization policy.

**Mr. Raymond Skelly (North Island—Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and an honour to rise today to respond to the bill before the House.

This proposal to privatize airports, especially the profitable ones, is a matter of serious concern for taxpayers in Canada. I think the old concepts of the Reagan and Thatcher era are starting to wear very thin. It is ironic that this government, as this concept is falling into disrepute, is just coming to fruition with so many of these projects.

I would use the example of the Social Credit government in British Columbia. We are waiting for an election there to finally put this anachronism away. That government privatized the highway system. It is amazing. I do not know of a single British Columbian who now approves this idea.

We watched the *Princess Marguerite*, hailed as a tremendous goal in privatization, go down the drain last week. Certainly it is a strange situation when the government moves into airport privatization.

I know that there are many people who want greater participation and it would be in the government's interest to develop a mechanism to get that local participation. Certainly bureaucrats in Vancouver have no feel for what is happening on the coast or in other areas of British Columbia. They certainly do not have adequate resources to meet the needs of those communities. They have been starved on one hand and they have had a great deal of difficulty in working with a regulatory framework to co-operate with communities.

I hope the government could find a mechanism other than privatization. I use the example of the harbours question because we seem to be much further along with that area of privatization. There are rumours rampant on the coast of British Columbia. I would like to deal in detail with these and hope that the minister might have an opportunity to rise and clarify the situation.

In every community along the coast of British Columbia the harbour is the transportation system. I would use as examples places like Klemtu and Bella Bella. The rate for food coming into those communities is enormous as