

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of declaring as rapidly as feasible a 90-10 formula of cost-sharing with the Atlantic provinces, of the highways program formerly carried on with those provinces by the Atlantic Development Board, and of joining with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the Fundy Trail project, and of joining with Nova Scotia in building a crossing across the Shubenacadie River.

This is not the first time that this or a similar motion has been debated in the House. On December 16, 1968, on a motion moved by the hon. member for Moncton, there was considerable debate about the Fundy Trail. However, the present motion is somewhat wider, not only because it makes reference to the Shubenacadie River crossing but also because, by necessary implication, it brings up for discussion the whole question of federal aid to the provinces in regard to highway construction.

I do not think any member of the House, especially a member from the Atlantic region, would be wholly inclined to disagree with this motion. Part of the motion, the part on which I expected to hear most debate, refers to the Fundy Trail. This is essentially a route that would be a great tourist attraction. It would follow the shores of the Bay of Fundy both on the New Brunswick and the Nova Scotia side. It would undoubtedly be a most attractive tourist route, following through some of the most scenic parts of the two provinces. However, from what I have seen of the terrain, it is quite rugged and therefore construction costs would be quite high. Its length would be approximately 550 miles from St. Stephen, New Brunswick to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, about half of this distance being in each province.

The existing highway that follows the shore of the Bay of Fundy for the most part does not afford a view of the waters of the bay. It runs inland from the bay, sometimes up to a distance of 40 miles, and the fishing communities dotted along the shore of the bay are themselves serviced by small branch roads. The constructing of roads inland in earlier times may have been dictated by the fact that it was less rugged country and therefore construction costs were cheaper.

• (5:40 p.m.)

Like all hon. members who have spoken, I am a great believer in the fullest possible development of the tourist potential of the Atlantic provinces. I believe we have something exceptional to offer tourists, especially in areas such as the proposed Fundy Trail and along our east coasts. I feel that the provinces in attempting to attract industry to our chronically depressed Atlantic provinces sometimes tend to overlook our real tourist potential. Perhaps this is because we compete with each other. It is unfortunate that in the past most efforts have been directed toward the attraction of resource-based industry. Considerable sums in grants and other concessions have often been made to that type of industry to induce them to locate there. However, the result in many cases has simply been the carting away of our natural resources by foreign companies which sometimes leave the landscape in a most unattractive condition.

A more enlightened approach in recent years has been shown by some companies who are exploiting our renew-

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able resources, particularly our forests, and have begun to show an interest in reforestation. The results of the exploitation of our non-renewable resources, such as minerals, are more serious since nothing can be done to replace our ore bodies in the ground. A further side-effect to the exploitation of our minerals is the damage which this operation does to one of our main tourist attractions, that is, the fish life to be found in our streams, lakes and rivers. Our pulp mills contribute as well, but to a lesser degree, to the destruction of this great natural resource.

I am keenly aware of this problem, living as I do on the banks of the Miramichi River, which is the greatest Atlantic salmon river in the world but where pollution is now reaching a dangerous stage. I am pleased to note that our Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis) is taking a very serious view of this matter and is showing polluters and potential polluters of our waters that he means business.

Let me return to the question of the Fundy Trail. It should be pointed out that although money is being made available by the government of Canada to the provinces to meet our pressing transportation problem, including highways, the priorities for such construction are set out by the provinces concerned. In the pressing and even desperate need to service relatively large provinces containing relatively small populations, they have so far elected to spend the moneys available on roads that would serve the dual purpose of providing transportation between major population centres and also assist the tourist industry.

I am not certain of the priorities set out by the province of Nova Scotia but I know that in New Brunswick, at least under the former government of Hon. Louis J. Robichaud, the main priority was for an all-weather road from Moncton to Chatham and thence to Bathurst and Campbellton. I hope the present government of New Brunswick will uphold this priority, especially in view of the fact that construction of this road had already commenced under the previous government. I might add that this road as well as connecting main population centres would be a very scenic one: it would follow the east coast of New Brunswick, crossing the Miramichi River at Chatham over the newly-constructed Centennial Bridge located in the constituency of Northumberland-Miramichi which I have the honour to represent in this House.

On the question of priorities, which I repeat—and I think the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants will agree—is a provincial matter, I should like to mention another project which has been discussed for almost as long as the Fundy Trail. It was started many years ago under the roads to resources program, and although passable with difficulty, it is far from being completed. I refer to the Renous-Plaster Rock highway, which would open up the whole central area of New Brunswick. Furthermore, it would tie in with the much discussed corridor road from New Brunswick to Montreal through the state of Maine. It would decrease the travel distance from eastern New Brunswick to Montreal by over 100 miles.

I mention the corridor road because it was referred to in a submission signed by the Premiers of the four