

Mr. BENNETT: Now, Mr. Chairman, that is the sort of cheap politics which meets any criticism made on a fair basis with respect to a public expenditure. The hon. member for Wellington South (Mr. Gladstone) directed attention to a matter which has had the consideration of this house on more than one occasion, namely, the question of pork barrel estimates. The hon. member for Queens (Mr. Sinclair) says I do not know where Prince Edward Island is. Well, the late administration provided a highway from Borden to Charlottetown. It also made provision for a road to reach the sea. It made large expenditures on highways on the island, because the soil is very rich and they have no stone or gravel with which to build roads. They received extensive assistance for that purpose.

My colleague directs my attention to the fact that there is an expenditure of about \$36,000 to be made at Pictou landing. There is your next start. Just look at the sequence of events. This matter, if properly considered by the committee, would at least involve some thought as to what the ultimate end will be. There is (1) \$200,000 for Wood Islands; that is the start, an expenditure for the piers; then there is (2) a ferry, which is to be subsidized to the extent of at least \$30,000 per year; (3) repairs totalling about \$36,000 to the wharf at Pictou landing—and I do not know what number 4 will be. Because I direct attention to it I am said to be the enemy of Prince Edward Island.

That province has a population of 80,000 people, and it was represented in this parliament by eight members. That action was taken in days gone by; their representation in the House of Commons could not be less than that in the Senate. When they came into confederation they were given four representatives in the Senate, two being taken away from New Brunswick and two from Nova Scotia. Under these circumstances it ill becomes the hon. member to say that when one draws attention to certain facts he is an enemy of the province.

That is exactly the trouble with our democracy in Canada at the present time. That is what is cursing this country. Let me tell the committee what they did in Australia when they discovered that a similar condition existed. Any estimates over a certain amount cannot be expended until a committee investigates the necessity for the expenditure. The committee hears the evidence of engineers and other people affected, and then makes a report.

Mr. NEILL: A committee of the house?

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, of all the parties. The secretary of that committee happens to

be a gentleman who has been attached to the prime minister's office since the days of the first prime minister, Mr. Barton. I had the privilege of having him with me for a period of six weeks, and I learned a great deal of the conditions under which they operate government. I was struck with this fact. Due to the depression, all capital expenditures were suspended and the committee did not meet, but while I was there they were discussing whether or not it should not be set up again.

I have asked the minister, but what has he told me as to whether or not he is warranted in pledging the credit of this country for thousands of dollars in connection with expenditures on Wood Islands harbour? The minister says that the subsidy is to be abandoned, but the member says they are relying upon getting this money. I am not unmindful of what will be said everywhere, that Bennett is the enemy of Prince Edward Island.

An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

Mr. BENNETT: An hon. member says "hear, hear," which shows the national outlook he has upon a question of fact. Can we afford it? We have been denied the right to spend money in many places where it is needed badly; we have been told we cannot afford it; yet we are starting here with a quarter of a million dollars and not knowing where it is going to end. A total of \$200,000 is asked for this harbour, and \$36,000 is being asked for Pictou Landing. As the minister says, this is the first appropriation. The hon. member tells us that this is for the piers. I say quite frankly that we have no intelligent appreciation of the necessity for these expenditures.

I wonder if the hon. member took the trouble to look at the figures to see what it is liable to cost us to manage this ferry? We lost over \$300,000 in operating the other ferry. The prices for handling traffic were reduced during the time of the previous government, so that it would be less costly to carry automobiles across and there were heavy expenditures to construct a road up to Charlottetown. The people of Prince Edward Island insisted that we separate the ferry from the railway in order that they might have a clear understanding of the situation. So they were separated, and any losses are now borne by the people of Canada as a whole.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Should that not be?

Mr. BENNETT: I am only pointing out the facts. I am not complaining, as we yielded to the requests which the province made. The hon. member has stated that he has been successful in inducing the government to make these present and future expenditures,