

The Budget—Mr. Gendron

Finally, there is a great volume of goods shipped from our region. This has been shown, not only by people of the area who submitted briefs, but also by experts whose knowledge, integrity and objectivity cannot be doubted.

Either the necessary effort to complete the most modern harbour facilities is made or the whole present substructure, railways, roads, airports, will slowly disintegrate and the area will become forever unproductive, although it has often shown its willingness to live and do its part for the prosperity of the country.

And I now come to the fourth use to which this port can be put, that of providing ferry service the year round.

We do not claim to be the only ones responsible for establishing communications between the two shores of the St. Lawrence. In my own district, the ferry between Trois-Pistoles and Les Escoumins provides very good service and fulfills a very real need.

Nevertheless, in this field, we have a very positive part to play, which is complementary to that of others, and, for that reason, we are in an ideal position to establish year round communications between Gros-Cacouna and Tadousac. First, the distance would be shortened, because we would overcome the two natural obstacles that are the Saguenay and the St. Lawrence rivers. Because of the shorter distance, rates would be reduced, the number of trips would be increased and traffic would increase on the four-lane Trans-Canada highway, which is to be extended to Rivière-du-Loup in 1972.

Anyone having a quick look at the map can see the deep penetration of Maine into our country and the entrance into Canada from the United States which is very close to Gros-Cacouana.

These means of communication will help to promote tourism considerably in this immense country so different from any other, the beautiful country of Maria Chapdelaine, the Chicoutimi area, where the natural beauty of the St. Lawrence and the Saguenay are blended, the picturesque lakes and still virgin lands of the North shore, the incomparable attractions of the St. Lawrence valley and of the Gaspé peninsula.

It is a sea bridge essential to the balanced development of these two regions economically complementary, one with agricultural surpluses, the other highly industrialized and with no agricultural calling.

If one is not shocked upon realizing that people living 15 miles apart must, during the

[Mr. Gendron.]

winter months, make a detour of 300 miles through Quebec city to meet one another, it is because one has lost all sense of responsibility, not to mention plain common sense.

Gros-Cacouna is a unique site, open all year round to navigation, with enough depth to accommodate the biggest ships in the world. We have seen that this was the unanimous desire of a wide area, of all its leaders, and that this project has been supported by top-ranking people in Canada and even outside the country, and that, according to the experts, heavy traffic is possible there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. I regret to have to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired, unless he has the consent of the House to continue.

[English]

Is it the pleasure of the House to give unanimous consent to the hon. member to carry on with his remarks?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Cinq minutes.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Mr. Gendron: Mr. Speaker, I thank the house for its indulgence, and I shall try not to take an unfair advantage.

If short-term returns are to be the sole criteria, then we must reluctantly give forever more to developed regions and give nothing at all to under-developed areas; it seems like a high price to pay for just keeping a whole area in its impoverished state.

All the great achievements in Canada, the transcontinental railways, the St. Lawrence Seaway, did not always seem justified at first blush, and so gave rise to much criticism; still, they were carried through because some had faith in the future of Canada, and the future proved them right.

As for us, we are quite willing to have that kind of faith which can move mountains but we would like to know that this responsibility is to be shared by those whose task it is to build up this country and to provide for its orderly development. They must understand the problems facing us: the problem of involving those who will be the first to profit by it; the problem born from regional rivalries, or from the inability of the Establishment to realize the fantastic job opportunities involved in this program. We must however