

*The Budget—Mr. Grégoire*

government and would allow all-year navigation up to the port of Montreal. It would also mean tremendous economic development all year long to the Montreal, Sorel, Trois-Rivières and Quebec city areas.

I wonder why people do not react to the facts Professor Brochu of the *École des hautes études commerciales* explains. In his book, he seems to find an explanation for all this, and I quote a paragraph to prove it:

To say the least, it is surprising that none of the members of the Montreal area has taken up the cudgels for the cause of winter navigation up to the Montreal harbour.

None of the members for the Montreal region have done so; that is astonishing. For instance, the Postmaster General (Mr. Côté) who comes from that area could become one of the champions of that cause. He could study the problem and ask the government to go into it deeply. Then, the—

The government would realize that the opening of the St. Lawrence to winter shipping is no problem, that the whole thing is settled, and that all that is needed is good will from the Department of Transport authorities.

Another member from the Montreal area who should take this matter at heart is the hon. member for Outremont-Saint-Jean (Mr. Noël). The hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm (Mr. Comtois), whose riding is quite close to Montreal should take interest in this also. The members from the Montreal area should raise the matter in caucus, as this is where they are supposed to do their work, and submit the question to the Minister of Transport and the proper authorities. But there is no reaction on this subject, and this is what bewilders me. Why do they not do something? Why is there not more insistence from the Montreal area members in favour of opening the seaway to winter traffic as far as Montreal?

This would allow the icebreakers to be used instead of being left at the dock. One of these at least could be freed. It could then be used to open navigation on the Saguenay.

This is what professor Brochu has to say on the subject:

The problem is as simple as the solution. We need only remember that ice forms on the Saguenay fjord from the island of St. Louis, 10 miles from the mouth of the river, to the first rapids upstream.

In other words, up to about Arvida.

Three vital ports for the economy of the province of Quebec are thus paralysed by ice: Port [Mr. Grégoire.]

Alfred (which imports bauxite and exports aluminum), Grande-Baie (export point for pulp and paper) and Chicoutimi (coastal shipping point). Therefore, in order to open the Saguenay to winter navigation, it would be enough, as for the section between Trois-Rivières and Montreal, to break the new ice that is forming and coming from the Saguenay at the beginning of winter, and repeat the operation about once a week; this fjord would then be easily navigable all winter.

The ice would be carried away very easily by the strong tides which occur twice daily, with the help of the west and northwest winds which blow most of the winter. Another asset is the almost complete absence of ice at the mouth of the Saguenay and off-shore during most of the winter.

Opening the mouth of the Saguenay to 1967 winter shipping is not a reckless nor a daring project.

It is purely a question of wanting to and of using very simple techniques, and it is surprising that the very active élite in the Lac St. Jean area has not yet tackled this question which could be solved immediately, and without doubt successfully, and which will bring in tens of millions of dollars in annual income.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the people of the Saguenay-Lac Saint Jean area have taken an interest in this problem and are asking for winter shipping on the Saguenay all the more because, according to Professor Brochu, it is not a reckless nor a daring project. It is simply a question of wanting to and of using very simple techniques.

The government could do two things: it could save by reducing our present needless spending and then, make rational use of the icebreakers which are idle between Trois-Rivières and Montreal, so that one of them could be free to go up the Saguenay. It would not cost more and the whole economy of the area would develop.

• (3:50 p.m.)

But why is it not done? Why refuse Quebec something that would not cost a cent more, since the men are there, paid and fed? The icebreakers are there, their motors running, in short everything is ready. The only thing we lack is the decision on the part of the Department of Transport to really allow for that winter navigation in the St. Lawrence.

I admit there may well be other areas in this country that would be unhappy, but then, let us make other plans in order to assist them in case they should suffer from winter navigation in the St. Lawrence. But the disadvantages would be quite trivial compared with the advantages for the economy of the entire central area of the country.