

The objective of these studies is to discover possible new approaches to today's transport problems that will be of practical benefit to the Atlantic Provinces and improve the efficiency of their transport systems. I wish at this time to express my appreciation of the fine spirit of co-operation, and the assistance extended to officials of my Department, in the areas in the Atlantic region which they have already visited, during the course of their studies to date.

I am glad to announce one other new development this evening, which I think may be of special interest and benefit to the Atlantic area. As most of you are aware, my Department is engaged in the development of an extensive icebreaker programme to provide assistance to shipping. These icebreakers operate during the winter in the Newfoundland and Maritimes area, and in the St. Lawrence River and Gulf. This fleet then serves as the major Canadian fleet protection and convoy operation in the Eastern Arctic during the summer.

We have now in service and under construction a number of icebreakers which will be of major assistance in achieving the objectives we have set for this programme for the next three to four years. It has been decided recently that the icebreaker, LABRADOR, which was built and operated hitherto by the Royal Canadian Navy, will be transferred for manning and operating as part of the Department of Transport icebreaker fleet. This excellent icebreaker, which has done great service in the Eastern Arctic during the summer months over the past few years under the RCN, and which also has performed a number of very valuable research tasks in connection with ice and hydrographic research, will be of major benefit to our future plans for icebreaking in the Newfoundland, Maritimes and Gulf area, since it is a strong, deep-draft ship, particularly suited for work in this connection.

While the takeover by the Department will not take place until some time in 1958, and final plans have not yet been made in this connection, it will operate mainly in the Gulf and Maritimes area, and in all probability will be based somewhere in the Maritimes area as well.

Although there has always been the highest possible degree of co-operation between the officials of the Federal and Provincial Governments, co-operation between governments alone will not make economic development of the Atlantic region a reality. There must also be the fullest co-operation of the people whom these governments represent. That is why the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council will play such a vital part in the work which lies ahead.

The Atlantic Provinces Economic Council was formed for the sole purpose of uniting the thinking and the efforts of business, industry and individuals in a crusade which would build confidence in the region, encourage investment in its future, and inspire the people of these provinces to themselves take an individual, active part, in building for the future.

I understand that APEC is engaged in conducting economic studies into various aspects of the economy of the Atlantic region, such as agriculture, electric power, the tourist trade, and possible industrialization: - that