

Government Orders

economy and our future. During their brief and not very well attended visits they develop a great expertise in our affairs and then pontificate at great length when they leave.

• (1055)

We do have our differences at home but we do resent being told how we do not deserve this development because we are too small and too insignificant in the great scheme of things.

Let us proceed with this project. We feel that all of the necessary commitments have been met and it is time to go on and see it through to fruition.

Mr. Dave Worthy (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today on report stage. The amendments that are in front of us, and there are a number of them, basically are just blocking amendments. They gut the bill. They delete these clauses clause by clause. Obviously they are meant as a symbol of opposition. They cannot be seriously debated because there is little meaning to them.

The hon. member representing the New Democratic Party was talking about some of the environmental issues and how we have to try to provide answers for the people. There are some people who, no matter what answers we provide or how many and how good they are, will never feel that they were enough. We know that. In society one can never answer all the questions people have, especially on an issue that does affect people emotionally.

I have talked to people on the Island and they are emotionally attached to one side of this issue or the other. Some of them want to keep their Island the way it is. Others want what I see as a bridge to prosperity and opportunity for the people of Prince Edward Island. In fact it is also a great opportunity for the people of New Brunswick and all of the maritimes.

As for the environmental issue, in the short time I have been dealing with this issue I have acquired two large brief-cases full of environmental information on the fixed link. I was perusing through some of it this morning in case we were going to be debating this issue for a while. I wanted to make sure I had the information

for reference. There is study after study dealing with various stages of the environmental issues, and these are the smaller ones that I could put in a small brief-case. I did not want to order a taxi to get up to the House.

They all contain answers. They contain analyses and evaluations of these very important issues. The net result is that they are providing answers that the people in Prince Edward Island and Atlantic Canada, at least the vast majority of them, recognize and deal with the problems and concerns. The answers are sound and positive.

If we can satisfy the constitutional concerns, the continuing environmental concerns and the legitimate business concerns on the contract that has to be struck, then the vast majority of the people in Atlantic Canada at least want to see this project go ahead. I would argue very strenuously that the vast majority of people in Canada, if they understood the essence of this agreement, would also want this project to go ahead.

The previous speaker from Prince Edward Island knows the Island and this issue far better than I do. He knows that there is strong support, not only from Prince Edward Island but from New Brunswick as well. When the committee was meeting the current premier of New Brunswick and the former premier of Prince Edward Island appeared before it. I have a quote somewhere here but it is mixed up with all my environmental studies. That is the problem with overstudying.

• (1100)

Several of the members presently in the House today were at the meeting where testimony was given by both of those premiers, by the people leading the people of Atlantic Canada, that they believe in this project. They want to see this project go ahead. It is a real opportunity for the people on the Island and all Canadians.

I represent people from British Columbia. Some of them asked me: "How can you support this megaproject on Prince Edward Island?" I replied: "It is very simple. First, it is a major project for them but it is one that is unique".

I am hoping dearly that this is going to be successful. I believe it can show us the way for many other projects across the country.