

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

long term loan which the federal government have offered to finance.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am raising the matter because of the tremendous interest on the lower mainland in this question. A third crossing is essential. The congestion is atrocious and appalling. Something must be done and done quickly. I welcome the fact that the minister has made a statement regarding the willingness of the federal government to make some contribution. Now I think it would be helpful if he could tell the people on the lower mainland of British Columbia something which is more specific about the nature of the offer of the federal government to assist in this very essential project.

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport):** First of all, Mr. Speaker, I think I should clear up something that the Minister of Labour hoped to have the chance of clearing up today, and that is that the stories that appeared in the *Vancouver Province* and which were reproduced by the C.B.C.—notwithstanding that the minister held a press conference in the meantime at which he said neither of these things—were in fact not representative of what he actually did say. The minister felt quite indignant about that and I think this should be cleared up. No figures were mentioned, quite deliberately. The primary responsibility in this matter is not the responsibility of the federal government.

• (10:50 p.m.)

I think hon. members who are experienced in dealing with the government of British Columbia know that one must be on one's toes in dealing with them. It did seem to us an indication that we were willing to be forthcoming and helpful with the people who have the primary responsibility, the provincial and local authorities, they might put forward a plan to expedite the goal that the hon. gentleman, all British Columbians and indeed all Canadians ought to have at heart.

The hon. gentleman is quite right about the importance of this third crossing to the third largest agglomeration of Canadians in this country. It is important that this be gone ahead with. It was felt by our government that if we showed we were ready to be cooperative it might perhaps act as a catalyst to bring forward a definite proposal from the provincial and local authorities. We are quite prepared to discuss the matter with them as soon as they have something concrete for us to discuss.

In the meantime the hon. gentleman, who in another capacity took part in a great many federal-provincial negotiations of this kind will, I am sure, particularly when one thinks of his origins, understand why the government is a little reticent about giving any figures at this time.

SHIPPING—REQUEST FOR OPENING OF  
CHANNEL TO AMHERST ISLAND

**Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Prince Edward-Lennox):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to detain the Minister of Transport at this late hour. I know he has had a heavy and busy day.

My intercession in the adjourned debate at this time concerns a matter of vital importance to an island municipality in my constituency of Prince Edward-Lennox. It is the municipality known as Amherst island, part of the county of Lennox and Addington. It was part of the old seigniory of LaSalle in 1675 under the French régime. It was then known as the Ile de Tonti, named after LaSalle's heroic Italian lieutenant, Henri de Tonti, who assisted him in the discovery and administration of the far-flung western regions of New France. Amherst island, a beautiful unspoiled rural gem on the breast of lake Ontario, is three miles from the mainland, approximately ten miles west of Kingston. It is now served during the navigation season by the motor vessel *Amherst Islander*, which plies between her home port of Stella, on the island, and Millhaven, on the mainland.

Each year due to thick ice in the channel, this vessel is forced to lay up for part of the winter until the opening of navigation. This ferry has been laid up since February 25 and the population of about 400 people, depending on its services, now awaits the end of this period of isolation. Many commodities are in short supply on the island at this time of the year and the people depend on various forms of transportation that can use the ice or the air. The ice is now unsafe, and there is no airport. As a result I have received a request from Reeve Harry Fleming and his council out of which evolved my question to the Minister of Transport this afternoon. My question was as follows:

Will the minister please authorize the icebreaker *Simcoe* now on its way up the St. Lawrence river to Kingston, to continue westerly to Millhaven dock, on the north shore west of Kingston, and from there to break a channel to Stella on Amherst island, in order that the ferry *Amherst Islander* may resume vital operations in service to Amherst island, the people of which are in serious need of the resumption of service with the mainland?