

*Supply*

area and its needs and address them with the reasonableness which a tripartite consideration would extend to each problem as it arose.

I regret very much that the Minister who spoke this morning has absented himself from the House, because I think he has a perception and an understanding of that principle, but does not have the prerogative of introducing it to a Government with policies such as those of the one presently to Your Honour's right.

● (1500)

I would have to say again that the moneys which are being spent supposedly for permanent benefit to this country and for the creation of short-term work have not extended themselves to the smaller communities of Canada. I recognize and appreciate the allocation of funds in Atlantic Canada which he mentioned. I also support the position taken by the Hon. Member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall).

While some of these expenditures are purely for Government edification and do not necessarily reflect the needs of the community, I approve of the forest structure which is going up in Fredericton and the school being built in Charlottetown. I would point out, however, that the moneys allocated for the school in Charlottetown rested in the office of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) for five years, I believe. That money remained unspent while he would not go down and negotiate a location acceptable to all. He sat inattentively in his seat for nearly five years after allocating the money. Therefore I do not think the Government has much to brag about in that regard.

I raised two issues with the Minister in question and I wish to repeat those now. They concern small craft harbours in Atlantic Canada and in my constituency of Carleton-Charlotte, in particular. Those harbours have been mercilessly and almost criminally neglected. The two harbours which I mentioned, St. George and St. Andrews, are important tourist attraction centres. They need those wharves both for the benefit of the fishermen and the tourists. They have been classified as unnecessary by the Department of Fisheries but have been promoted by myself, my constituency and the Government of New Brunswick. Wharves have been denied to those harbours by successive Ministers of Fisheries and Oceans and I suggest that the Minister now responsible for the expenditure of this developmental money put a permanent asset in these two communities as a result of the representations by their mayors. That would not be porkbarrelling; it would be recognizing a need.

A committee has been appointed under the Hon. Member from Cornwall whose ministry I cannot identify since they have been shuffled to the point of incomprehension. That committee will experiment with the processing and marketing of forest products. I am concerned that no one has chosen to address the subject matter which is most pertinent to the ongoing health of that industry. It is the forest management program. Once again, the Government has criminally neglected its responsibility, which has been under Government

authority for decades, to undertake the research and development aspects of the forest industry. While the pulp and paper industry has perhaps conducted most of the research in that area, the research of forest management has basically been under federal responsibility and has been neglected since its reduction in the budget introduced by the Liberal Government in late 1978. An increase in research funds has not been reinstated and I cannot think of any better use of this developmental money which is at loose ends than funding such a forest management program. I only hope that the full approval for the forest complex will be achieved in the very near future.

At this time I must briefly mention the neglect of the needs of the potato industry. The industry was neglected by the Minister of Agriculture who was advised in late March or early April of the problem arising in New Brunswick in this regard. He was asked to declare it a disaster area. Let me make a final suggestion to the Minister which I believe he could accommodate rather quickly if he chose to do so.

Since the Province of New Brunswick has had to fill the void which was left by federal responsibility, I submit that the Minister should become the co-guarantor with the farmers of the money loaned by the New Brunswick Farm Adjustment Program. That program is financing the planting of crops in New Brunswick. Not only do I believe that this approach is the only easy way out, but it is now the practical step for the Government to take. It does come within the jurisdiction and capability of the Government under various enabling legislation which has been passed in the House for ministerial discretion. I ask that the Minister follow that route.

The Minister told the House that he was seeking a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture in New Brunswick. That was nearly two weeks ago but no meeting has yet been held. I can assure the House that the farmers of New Brunswick are waiting for the Minister of Agriculture of Canada to have that meeting and that it be meaningful.

Another area of concern in Atlantic Canada is transportation. It is an issue which has not been studied. This question applies to Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. It is a problem that affects all of Atlantic Canada. Apparently the Government does not feel that this subject deserves consideration. The only action I have seen taken in the ten years I have been in Ottawa is the withdrawal of subsidies. Those subsidies have been withdrawn under the heavy club of the Government saying that while it will contribute small amounts for our highways it will withdraw subsidies in other areas, leaving no room for negotiation. That was essentially the position presented to the Premiers of Atlantic Canada as certain subsidies were surrendered.

The MFRA has become inadequate for any Province in Atlantic Canada. It is indefensible by any conscientious Atlantic Member of the House of Commons. If billion of dollars are going to be spent in permanent development for Canada, it is high time that transportation be addressed whether it is in form of assistance to the industry or development of harbours, railroads or other infrastructure. There is no better place to spend money on a permanent, long-term basis