

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

### FIXED LINK—REQUEST FOR STATUS REPORT

**Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell:** Honourable senators, in view of Senator Macquarrie's statement in the Senate today, and in view of press releases from time to time and public meetings that are taking place in Prince Edward Island, can the Leader of the Government in the Senate bring us an up-to-date report on the stand the government has taken following the court decision concerning the fixed link to Prince Edward Island?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** I do not know that there is very much I can add to what the government has already stated on this matter. I believe we announced that we are appealing the decision of the court and that we were pursuing the environmental review which we believed would satisfy the requirements. However, I will bring in a formal statement from my cabinet colleague on the matter within a few days.

## NEW BRUNSWICK

### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL ARRANGEMENT FOR HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION—REQUEST FOR COPY OF AGREEMENT

**Hon. Gildas L. Molgat (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question to the minister concerns an announcement that came at the beginning of April regarding a special arrangement that the federal government made with the province of New Brunswick for highway construction. The statement was that some \$300 million would be pumped into the reconstruction of the crumbling highways of that province. I do not know if that is a proper description of the highways of New Brunswick. However, there is a special agreement and perhaps we might have copies of that agreement. Also, if similar agreements have been signed with other provinces, could we have copies of those as well?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, we have signed agreements with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and I think I am on safe ground in saying that an announcement was made by my colleague Mr. Mayer concerning a shared-cost program with Manitoba. There have also been some announcements made with respect to Alberta. I will obtain a summary of these matters and bring to the Senate copies of any agreements that have been signed and table them here.

**Senator Molgat:** My honourable friend is correct; there have been agreements with other provinces, notably that of my own province of Manitoba. However, there seems to be a vast discrepancy in the amounts awarded to the different provinces. While he is obtaining the information, perhaps the Leader of the Government can give us the rationale behind the amount allocated to each province and how that is

determined. Is it by population? Is it based on the provincial budget? What is the calculation?

**Senator Murray:** Honourable senators, as Senator Corbin would be happy to point out to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, conditions are different from one province to another. A matter such as federal assistance to provinces for highway construction could not be determined on some arbitrary basis such as population or the like. We do our best to assist provinces to meet the needs that exist.

**Senator Molgat:** I thank the minister for that additional information. I wonder if he might get for me some more information as to how that need is established? How that need is determined, is what I would like to find out.

**Senator Murray:** Ministerial colleagues who have made these announcements on behalf of the government will have dealt with the particular conditions existing in one province or another. I will obtain copies of those statements to table when I table the agreements.

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

### FIXED LINK—EFFECT OF INCREASED TRAFFIC ON HIGHWAYS—FEDERAL ASSISTANCE—GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell:** Perhaps the Leader of the Government could help us with respect to arrangements that have been made regarding Prince Edward Island, where the railway has been taken away, and where 18-wheelers are now on all our roads. We do not have any rock to hold a good road base and, consequently, the roads in Prince Edward Island are the same as, or worse than, those in New Brunswick.

What agreements or funds will be made available for that province? If the fixed link is constructed, rail cars will no longer cross on ferries and, consequently, even more trucks will be on the roads. In that event, will there be any compensation for the province of Prince Edward Island in lieu of taking away our rails?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I will be glad to table the information concerning highway agreements that the Government of Canada has had with the province of Prince Edward Island in recent years.

## DELAYED ANSWERS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. John Lynch-Staunton (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have replies to questions asked on March 24, three by Senator Molgat, relating to grain sales to Russia, the future of the Port of Churchill, and a communications system for troops on peacekeeping; on March 24 by Senator Perrault regarding NAFTA and low wage rates; on March 25 by Senator Molgat