

*The Address—Mr. H. J. Flemming*

minister and the government that a transportation policy should be and must be a policy for all Canada and should have one aim and one purpose, to build, maintain and develop a united Canada. That should continue to be our aim and objective, because we all believe in the unity of all Canada.

Many hon. members have expressed themselves as being favourable to that general premise when speaking in this chamber during the last few days. That is what has been said here, and it was repeated time and again. I am sure it cannot be repeated too often. No government can contribute to the unity of Canada unless it indicates that it does not favour a policy which is designed to build up one part of Canada with public funds at the expense of another part, but that is exactly what is being done when ice-breakers are used to keep the St. Lawrence open during the winter season.

My hon. friend from Saint John-Albert dealt with this matter just a few days ago. He suggested remedies for the situation, one of which was that the vessels concerned should be charged with the expense of ice-breaking, whether they ordered it or not. I propose to make another suggestion, but before doing so I point out that there is nothing more unsatisfactory in business and nothing more unsatisfactory in government than uncertainty. So I ask the Minister of Transport why not, by regulation, set down the period of winter season during which eastern Atlantic ports will be utilized, and no responsibility will be recognized for keeping open the St. Lawrence at government intervention and expense? In the old days this period ran, I believe, from December 1 to April 15. I suggest that these dates be re-established as the winter season.

What would happen if this were done? It would bring about a uniformity of competition. All the steamship companies and all companies using the steamships would know exactly where they stood. They would not be subject to the fluctuations of the weather. What I said a few minutes ago about uncertainty, I repeat now. People who ordered goods would be certain they were going to receive the goods at a certain time. Another advantage would be that they would use the facilities already provided in the ports of Saint John and Halifax at public expense. This would be to the benefit of the eastern Atlantic ports during the entire season, and surely that is something which would be of interest and satisfaction to all members within the sound of my voice this afternoon. This would also contribute to the unity of Canada in its best and broadest sense.

For these reasons I urge the minister to recommend this regulation to the government before another season rolls around, because since we are blessed with an over-supply of certain commodities which are needed by the world population, we are surely entrusted with the responsibility of using a degree of intelligence in the shipping of these surplus goods to world markets. In the production of forest products, a business in which I worked for the greater part of my life, we learned that in order to produce economically we had to work with nature, not against nature. That is what I suggest relative to winter shipping.

I wish to refer to another paragraph in the speech from the throne. It is this:

A measure will be placed before you to establish a comprehensive system of contributory pensions.

I am amazed, shocked and disappointed at the absence of the word "portable" in that sentence. I say this because I believe the general desirability of portable pensions is something upon which there is complete agreement in this chamber, and something for which a great urge exists throughout our country. In order to discuss this matter intelligently may I make some comments in connection with portable pensions and the part they play in the private enterprise economy. My mind goes back to a young man who spoke to me a few months ago. He said he had been with his company for 10 years. He was not very happy there. He felt the job he had undertaken was one for which he was not particularly suited by inclination or training. But he found himself frozen in it because a pension had been established which would not move with him. Thus he was discouraged from moving even though he felt a move would be good for him and probably good for his employer also. It is my opinion that in making a change, for the better as far as he was concerned, the pension should accompany him.

It appears that the absence of the word "portable" in the reference in the speech from the throne to contributory pensions means only one thing, namely that the portable feature will not be introduced when the legislation is brought down, and to me that is a distressing thought.

My hon. friend from Parry Sound-Muskoka placed certain remarks on record in the course of a brilliant speech a few days ago. I say to the government that they should correct some of the errors to which he made reference that day or they will find themselves less fortunate than they were a few nights ago when the votes of five members of opposition parties saved them from defeat on a motion of confidence. I say to the government that in line with the observations of the hon.