

spot investigation of transportation conditions by members of the committee in person and in the locality.

The same editorial goes on to speak of the blow to maritime industry struck by changes in the freight rates. This is a complex subject and one on which I will not attempt to elaborate at this time, but it is one to which I will return at a later date. Suffice it to say that this is one of the aspects of a poor transportation picture which grows worse daily and is continually militating against efforts at industrial development.

• (4:30 p.m.)

Then, too, there is the newest concept in transportation, which is actually a revival of the old idea of North America acting as a land bridge between Europe and Asia. Changes in transportation technology indicate that goods can be shipped between Asia and Europe more cheaply and faster over a North American land route than through the Panama Canal. The freight is trans-shipped in standard sized containers on special trains that are never uncoupled and are used only for this purpose.

But we must move quickly to provide a deep-water superport on the east coast, capable of handling these huge new supercarriers. The United States is all too aware of the potential involved and is already negotiating with the land carriers to use United States ports. The maritimes area has several possible sites, any of which can be developed, and such development should be an integral part of the over-all transportation scheme.

In my initial address in this house I have tried simply to highlight some of the problems that face the people of my own constituency, and the Atlantic region as a whole. There is a great deal more to be said on all these subjects, but I believe individual topics can be dealt with more appropriately when various special pieces of legislation come before the house.

If nothing else, I would like to feel that members, government members in particular, have caught something of the urgency of the situation in the Atlantic region and that they now more fully appreciate that this is not merely a regional problem but a national one. I trust, too, that they are not under the impression that we of the Atlantic provinces are seeking more hand-outs, more money or begging in any sense. We are not. We are seeking more effective forms of assistance in

The Address—Mr. Kaplan

order that we may become self sufficient and play our proper and full role, as Canadians, in making our country prosper and grow.

One tangible way in which the government could show that they appreciate the urgency of our position would be by activating the transportation and communications committee and having it visit the area of greatest concern. We from the Atlantic region came to Ottawa expecting much, Mr. Speaker. We were promised much, if not by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on his fleeting election campaign visits, then certainly by his spokesmen. So far, we have been disappointed. The Prime Minister frequently takes public pride in not having made any election promises. He may not have made many explicit promises, but he made one gigantic implicit promise. His whole election pitch was one great promise to the Canadian people that, under him, things would be changed; things would be done; things would be different. He was elected to head a majority government. He is now Prime Minister of Canada. Let him now redeem the promise that brought him to office. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert P. Kaplan (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to join the other hon. members of this house in congratulating you on your election as Speaker of the house? We wish you full success in the discharge of your duties.

[*English*]

It is a great honour for me to join in the deliberations of this chamber, an institution which, in the tradition of the mother parliament, has fought for and created popular political democracy. It is a forum in which is presented the government's policies for Canada and a forum for exposé, criticism, and the presentation of the policies of the opposition. The many voices of the people of Canada echo in this chamber. These historic walls remind one of the long history of meaningful controversies which have been fought in Canadian parliament: our Confederation; the opening of the west and our transportation policies; free trade and tariff protection; war, peace and conscription; the opening of the north. Canadian identity and nationality have been forged in large measure within these walls.

I regret to say that this rich and meaningful tradition of the best in parliament stands in marked contrast to the aimless debates of the past days. I do not mean to be critical of