

Detailed studies are continuing on new passenger ferries and the related ports requirements. The final design stage should be reached this year.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I can see no reason why the government should favour the motion moved by the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe to take away the right of workers to strike which has been given to them in the past. It is certainly their right, and I for one would not want to support any such action.

Mr. Walter C. Carter (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention to take part in this debate because, as the House recalls, we had a similar debate on Monday afternoon last in connection with a private member's notice of motion which I placed on the order paper, concerning the ferry service.

But having listened to the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) I cannot help but rise to make a few comments in connection with some of the things he said. The hon. member has the uncanny ability to twist words and to make black white.

● (1730)

No one on this side of the House, including the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall), has suggested that workers should not have the right to strike. The hon. member's motion suggests, as my motion of last Monday suggested, that the 500,000 people living on the island part of Newfoundland-Labrador have the right of access to the Canadian mainland and the right to expect goods passengers and motor cars to travel to the mainland without interruption.

Perhaps if Canadian National had been more generous, more considerate, more willing to listen to reason the strikes which took place in the ferry service would not have taken place. The strike which took place last year, which isolated the island part of the province by removing the ferry service, and which imposed hardships on those travelling between the island and the mainland, can be blamed on the attitude of Canadian National and that of the Canadian government generally.

When the hon. member replied to my motion on Monday it was apparent that he was reading a speech which had been written for him, probably by some upper Canadian oriented bureaucrat. Obviously he had taken a correspondence course in cost accounting, because he included in the speech figures to do with the cost of transporting goods per ton from the mainland of Canada to the island part of the province of Newfoundland. My hon. friend's speech writer did not take into account that every ton of freight brought to our province, or brought to Atlantic Canada generally, which is manufactured in Upper Canada, in the golden triangle, is contributing greatly to the economy of the latter area. Certainly the cost of the subsidy is not a negative factor, as the parliamentary secretary would have the people of Canada and this House believe.

We recognize that substantial subsidies are being paid by the government in connection with the ferry service. That, however, is not the argument. The hon. member tried to twist the argument around completely, and to misinterpret the meaning of the motion I moved on Monday, and that which the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe brought forward today.

Newfoundland Ferry Service

We recognize that the ferry service is costly. We recognize, too, that keeping rail freight and passenger service in operation in other parts of Canada costs the Canadian taxpayer a lot of money. The cost of building and maintaining the trans Canada highway was, and is tremendous. That cost is borne by the Canadian taxpayer. We say that, according to the terms of union, we are entitled to travel from the island part of the province to the mainland of Canada without paying a toll or tariff.

How would the hon. member feel if he had to pay a toll charge every time he left his province and drove to Ontario or Saskatchewan? How would manufacturers in his province feel if a tariff were levied on goods manufactured in Manitoba and exported to other provinces, or on goods being brought into Manitoba? That, in effect, is what is happening in Newfoundland.

I contend, and my colleagues agree, that the 90 miles of water separating the island part of Newfoundland from the mainland should be treated, for purposes of rate structures, exactly as if they were 90 miles of trans Canada highway. The same argument could be advanced for the island province of the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie). A person living in Ontario can cross the bridge to Quebec without paying a toll or tariff.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make it clear that I was not talking against the transportation system as such. My remarks were directed against the motion presented by the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall), and against the idea of taking away the right to strike of employees. That is a different matter.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. The hon. member has had a chance to make his speech. I think he should allow the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Carter) to express his own opinion.

Mr. Carter: I am sure, now that the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) is in the chamber, that he will be pleased to know that the hon. member for St. Boniface has levied accusations at him, too, with regard to the right to strike. The right to strike of Canadian National employees working on the ferry service is being questioned by that party. The hon. member may wish to deal with this.

I will not take up any more of the time of the House. I hope that this motion, unlike the one brought forward on Monday last, will come to a vote. May I leave one word with hon. members: we are not being extravagant in our demands. We know what it costs to keep the ferry service working. We are only asking as an island province, and I include P.E.I. in my remarks, that we be treated like any other part of Canada, and that the people living on these islands not be penalized merely because they live on an island.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): I agree.

Mr. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us is silent on how the employees concerned would go about improving their pay and working conditions. It therefore seems reasonable and fair for the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) to assume that the