

CNR and Air Canada

then to Montreal. I presume, and take for granted that this service will be in addition to that presently being provided. I certainly hope that the Air Transport Commission will grant the application and permit Eastern Provincial Airways to expand its service to Prince Edward Island, and will bear in mind the refusal of Air Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McQuaid: I have talked about some of our transport problems. I cannot resist the temptation to suggest that, in addition to the remedies I have mentioned, there is another remedy which, if it had been applied, would have improved our situation tremendously. If the government in power today had seen fit to build the causeway to Prince Edward Island, our situation would have been transformed entirely.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McQuaid: I was interested to read a speech made in the other place a few days ago by Senator Bonnell, a Senator who comes from the island. He said in part:

Honourable senators, what is needed to prevent this continued isolation—

He was speaking of the isolation of Prince Edward Island.

—is something we have heard about so often—the causeway. Different prime ministers have promised the causeway, but each time the project has been postponed by some tight money policy or high rates of interest.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows that it is irregular to quote from the debates of the other place.

Mr. McQuaid: Mr. Speaker, what the Senator neglected to say was that if the Diefenbaker government had remained in power, Prince Edward Island would have had a causeway today connecting it with the mainland. There is absolutely no question about it.

Mr. Pepin: Make it retroactive.

Mr. McQuaid: I sincerely suggest that if the government wants to improve our communications in that way, it is not too late for it to do so. Let the government go ahead with the construction of the causeway, and let there be improved railway service between Prince Edward Island and the mainland.

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, it would be impossible in the time that I will have today to deal with all the questions and issues which have been raised in this debate.

Mr. Forrestall: The minister might at least try.

Mr. Jamieson: I might say to the hon. member opposite and others that I fully intend today to make a very objective and non-controversial speech. I hope it will be received in that way. I repeat: I would find it impossible to cover all the matters which have been raised in the time allotted to me. Transportation is such a complex subject that it simply cannot be covered in a speech of 40 minutes. I assure the House and all hon. members, including the

[Mr. McQuaid.]

hon. member who made a remark just now, that I am at their disposal, either in committee or elsewhere, as often as they wish and for as long as they wish, to ensure a full discussion of those matters that are of concern to them and fall within my area of responsibility.

I agree with the claim that a reorganized structure is necessary in order that members and the country generally can obtain more information, and obtain it more easily, about all aspects of transportation. With this objective in mind, I propose to bring before the House in the next session three important pieces of legislation on which work is proceeding at the present time. The first of those is a bill designed to reconstitute Air Canada as a separate Crown corporation, thus divorcing it, as it were, from the CNR. I will also introduce a Canadian National Railways revision act and a companion piece of legislation covering amendments to the Railway Act. Hon. members will know how involved and far reaching these changes are; they have been asking for them for the last two or three years. These changes have entailed a great deal of work, which is still proceeding. I believe, however, that these bills are essential and I will bring them forward as soon as they are ready.

Since there will be time for a wide-ranging discussion in committee, I thought that it might be appropriate if, today, in the 40 minutes which are available to me in this House, in accordance with a commitment previously given, I were to discuss and deal with one subject that is obviously of very great interest to a large number of hon. members, the matter of a transportation policy for the Atlantic Provinces. I feel reasonably confident that we can all agree that the transportation problems of the Atlantic region cannot be considered in isolation. This is on all fours with my own judgment since I, like most hon. members, recognize that transportation policy must be the means to the attainment of economic and social objectives. Unless we who live in the Atlantic area know what it is we want to achieve and gear our transportation planning to assist these objectives, there is every possibility that we will repeat the mistakes of the past and fail to make our initiatives in transportation responsive to our wider and more basic objectives and ambitions.

I think we have to agree, as well, that the record of the period dating back almost to confederation is crammed with evidence of attempts at economic development that failed to meet the expectations of their well meaning and often dedicated promoters. There are many reasons for these costly failures; amongst them is the inadequacy of past transportation policy and facilities. It would be a mistake, however, to preserve the mythology, entrenched by nearly a century of frustration, that great industrial complexes would blossom throughout Atlantic Canada if only the transportation drawbacks were removed. Regrettably it is not that simple.

• (1530)

The problems of the past in attracting industry to this area will be compounded in the 1970's. We have only to look at such centres as Toronto, Montreal and a few others to realize that most new types of developments tend to polarize around large metropolitan centres. I am compelled to state my belief that despite the best efforts of aggressive Chambers of Commerce and the provision