

Government Orders

There are many reasons that this fixed link is a superb idea. Members much more involved from the provinces of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick have articulated these ideas, but I would like to talk just about one area where I see the fixed link making a difference. It was very interesting that a member questioned my colleague from Egmont about the traffic and about getting to Iles-de-la-Madeleine, which is the area I want to talk about.

In spite of all of the setbacks and drawbacks in Atlantic Canada, we think we really are the most fortunate people in the country. If one is fortunate enough to live in Atlantic Canada, particularly in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island is normally the vacation place of choice. I must say New Brunswick is also, but we like to go to P.E.I. for the beaches, the wonderful golf courses, the great food, the terrific restaurants, and on and on.

I have been visiting Prince Edward Island as a tourist since I was a small child. I have jokingly referred to the fixed link from time to time as the span of Green Gables. That reminds us why young women in this country consider a visit to Prince Edward Island to be practically a religious experience: the shrine of Anne of Green Gables and that great Canadian writer, and feminist I might add, Lucy Maud Montgomery.

I have spent many hours as a child, as an adolescent and as an adult sitting in a car, usually at Cape Tormentine, waiting for a ferry. I remember one particular visit at this time of year. When Joe says he does not want to go to the Battlefords in February he is probably right. However, getting to P.E.I. in February can be quite something too when one is dependent upon the mercy of the ferry in the Northumberland Strait when the ice is in.

There was a meeting. It was the kick-off to a very famous political campaign. The Atlantic provinces student Liberals were meeting in Charlottetown in 1968 to decide whose students would support the leadership of a great political party. A group of us from Halifax headed out for Tormentine. Given that it was February we did pretty well. We arrived there in about four hours from Halifax. We then waited for six hours until the old *Abegweit* could get into the dock. We got on the *Abegweit*. I think normally it takes about 45 minutes to cross in good weather, but seven and a half hours later we landed in P.E.I. It is one thing when it is a group of students. We had a good time on that ferry.

An hon. member: I suspect you did.

• (1235)

Ms. Clancy: Yes, we did. We really did not mind a whole lot the almost seven hour extension of the trip.

I remember we were met on that illustrious morning by one of Prince Edward Island's most famous sons. I refer to Premier Alec Campbell as he then was and who today is Mr. Justice Campbell of the island's supreme court. Premier Campbell was not very happy on that day. He knew the ferry had been frozen in

the middle of the strait for over seven hours. He took the opportunity to make a public speech right there and he got a good crowd, as island politicians usually do. He spoke about the fact that the ferry really did not fulfil the constitutional agreement to create a proper link and a proper mode of transportation to and from Prince Edward Island.

That happened 26 years ago this month. I remember it very well. Consequently most of my subsequent trips to Prince Edward Island have been by air or in the summertime, but I have never forgotten the passion with which Premier Campbell addressed this issue.

I discussed this issue on many occasions because, as the member for Egmont can tell you, I was not a total convert to the concept in the beginning. The member for Egmont, the Secretary of State for Veterans, two other premiers of Prince Edward Island, Premier Callbeck and former Premier Ghiz, and the present member for Malpeque have all had a part in convincing me that this is absolutely the right thing, not just for the people of Prince Edward Island, not just for the people of Atlantic Canada but for the people of Canada. It will create the access we need and deserve to get to the cradle of Confederation, one of Canada's unique beauty spots.

Members who have been here for any length of time know and new members will learn very soon that being members of Parliament gives us a very privileged sense of the country as a whole, as a unit from sea to sea to sea.

To go to Charlottetown and see where the fathers, sent by the mothers, of Confederation first met to discuss what would happen in 1867 gives one a very particular and very warm view of what the politicians of the day were struggling over, arguing over, negotiating and deciding to do for Canadians then and now. Young Canadians from the other nine provinces would benefit from visiting, seeing and spending time in the cradle of Confederation. I agree that we would all benefit, young people in particular, from seeing all the parts of this magnificent country.

Tourism is one of Prince Edward Island's major industries and we certainly do not see people staying away because of the ferries. However, as we enter a more modern age heading toward the year 2000 it is only sensible to ensure that access to that province be done in the most sensible, safest and time saving way. That is why those of us in this House from the province of Nova Scotia stand in great support of our colleagues from Prince Edward Island and in great support of our colleagues from New Brunswick.

Another thing I would like to bring to the attention of the House is the fact that this fixed link is going to create an incredible number of jobs. In the provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick the creation of jobs is something every one of us is committed to and I can only say it is with an almost spiritual fervour. We do not like to be considered