

Several mining prospects in the immediate vicinity of the extension include East Sullivan Mines Limited, Federal Metals Corporation and it is to be expected that the availability of rail transport will further the exploration in the entire area of Matane and Gaspé north.

It is particularly in the field of mineral exploration and resource development that the presence of a railroad should be beneficial to this part of the province of Quebec. It is a recognized fact of economic development that reduced transportation costs can, under favourable circumstances, actually create new traffic and transform into carloads certain materials that heretofore had never been considered economically usable. To discover such latent traffic is a challenging task to which the business people of the area will apply their traditional resourcefulness and inventiveness.

Finally, I should like to refer briefly to the potential traffic in general merchandise. The coastal communities of Gaspé so far have had to rely on coastwise shipping services as the cheapest available means of transport for this category of commodities. Unfortunately, however, this traffic is limited by the length of the navigation season and is becoming inadequate by present standards. In this respect, through rail rates available all year round should constitute a big improvement.

Here again, the resourcefulness of local agricultural, industrial and small business leaders will undoubtedly be given a new and wider scope for the production, exchange or further processing of local materials with a view to their marketing in other parts of the country as well as obtaining needed materials more efficiently and cheaply from suppliers elsewhere in Canada.

Mr. Chairman, the government feels that the natural resources in forests, minerals and agriculture abounding in this part of Quebec combined with a marked reduction in transportation charges will enable the progressive population of the Gaspé north shore to achieve within a few years what they have been dreaming of for half a century: full economic development on a scale comparable to that achieved by their compatriots in other parts of the country.

In this respect, I wish to emphasize the vital importance of the part to be played by the local agricultural, industrial and business leaders of the area in question. Granted that the federal government is taking the initiative of providing rail service and has made it possible for the Canadian National Railways' experienced traffic and industrial development officers to be available to advise shippers on this new branch line in matters of traffic development. It remains, of course, for the business community both in Gaspé and the country at large to make the most of this challenging opportunity to develop new processing and marketing patterns to and from the area opened up by this railway.

It is my opinion that the passage of this measure will serve Canadians in at least three ways: it will provide for immediate employment in the construction of the line; it will provide additional employment with the railway company involved in operating and maintaining this new line; and, most important of all, it will enable the rapid creation of many more jobs and economic wealth both in the area of the Gaspé north shore itself and in the rest of the country. Passage of this measure will make an outstanding contribution to the economic development—one might, perhaps, say rehabilitation—of one of Canada's most historic regions.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to add that if you look at the map you will note that Ste. Anne des Monts will be regarded as sort of the railhead on the south shore; that is, the easternmost terminal on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, and Ste. Anne des Monts is right across from Seven Islands where, at the present time, a tremendous mineral development and hydro