

tribution toward the economic development of the Atlantic provinces.

Before hon. members who raise points of order rush back in to scream "foul" because this suggests the spending of money by the government, I would point out that this recommendation was more or less in the form of a prayer attached to the end of the Transport Committee's report. We felt this was the only way of escaping the censure of those who remind us that a private member cannot bring in a resolution which involves the expenditure of money.

The fact is that the private members on that committee, and they were from all political parties, agreed unanimously that this was a most important matter, this 90-10 formula for Atlantic Canada highways. The Atlantic Development Board is deceased, but its ghost is well remembered for the work it did in connection with highway development in my part of Canada. Late in 1969, on December 1, I engaged in one of those late night fishing expeditions at ten o'clock, on that occasion with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. O'Connell). I asked him to find out in some general way what the new department of regional economic expansion proposed in the form of cost sharing arrangements in connection with future highway developments in Atlantic Canada. As reported at page 1473 of *Hansard*, I said:

I am wondering whether the formula will cover such projects as the Shubenacadie River crossing or a second bridge from Halifax across the northwest arm, both being within the riding of Halifax-East Hants.

The parliamentary secretary replied:

Let me say that the development programs which the Department of Regional Economic Expansion is currently discussing with provinces in the Atlantic Region are expected to make provision for a certain amount of highway assistance integrated with comprehensive plans for regional development.

At the time of the federal election of the year before, for the first time, East Hants became part of my responsibility. The people there are very anxious, and have been over the years, to obtain some crossing of the Shubenacadie River which would cut off many tens of miles for people on the west bank of the river and greatly convenience those in the Colchester-Maitland-Hants County area. I hold up one of my files to indicate I have been somewhat fervent in my correspondence with members of the federal and provincial governments on this matter. I gave the people concerned the promise that I would work hard for this project and I am trying to do just that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCleave: Since my time is limited, I will try to deal with some of the aspects that are on record. For example, in a letter to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson) last year, I said:

Here are several reasons which I suggest be considered in support of the building of the crossing.

(1) Truck traffic into and out of the Annapolis Valley to the east is increasing, and because transport trucks are becoming larger and heavier, either bridges on existing routes will have to be improved or a crossing provided.

Highways

(2) Annapolis agriculture would benefit by the shorter haul to the Truro area (and on to New Brunswick).

(3) If a causeway were decided upon, a great inland fresh water lake would develop, thus providing a logical northern playland for Metropolitan Halifax-Dartmouth, as well as an extension of the metropolitan growth centre.

(4) In due season, Fundy tidal power will be developed. In the course of hundreds of millions of dollars of construction, no doubt important savings would be made by having a shorter link from Truro.

(5) There are educational and health benefits for the people on the west side of the Shubenacadie River whose natural capital is Truro.

(6) The crossing is a logical link in a Fundy trail.

As a matter of fact, it occurred to me only a few weeks ago when I took a fresh look at the plans for Fundy power development, that the crossing could well be on top of a dam. Fundy power development will need at least three dams to be effective and the crossing could be made on top of one of them, thus combining a vista of a man-made wonder of the world with transportation benefits. I know that in France where they have harnessed tidal power they have turned that project into a tourist attraction. This might be of benefit; it might be considered. Perhaps I should not even have mentioned it, because it might give people an opportunity to put off the building of the Shubenacadie River crossing for another 40 years.

I also wrote to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand), to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) and to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen). The Minister of Transport provided a quick answer as one would expect. He did point out that this was not part of a highways program for last year. I gather that the highways program for that year was limited to the completion of the Trans-Canada Highway; it would certainly have been drawn up much earlier in the year than the date on which I sent him the letter. Be this as it may, it was not a submission by the provincial government to the federal government at that point. The answer I received from the President of the Privy Council, then the Minister of Manpower and Immigration was that he was actively pursuing the matter with his colleagues.

A major development came on August 27 at a meeting of the provincial cabinet in Halifax, when it was unanimously agreed that the Shubenacadie crossing bridge should be included in the five-year plan to be presented to Ottawa some time this fall. This information is contained in a letter from Mr. Gerald C. Ritcey, the provincial secretary for trade, written to Mr. Herbert McDuffie, president of the Shubenacadie River crossing committee. Then, came the provincial election, and I gather that at the moment the river crossing project is still very much a dream—a dream without any concrete reality.

Among the proponents of this project over the years is Mr. Herbert McDuffie, who is head of the committee with respect to it. He is an old man now, and I suppose in his evening years he hopes to see at least a start made on the crossing. The Maritime Provinces Chamber of Commerce has also been a proponent of the scheme. Mr. Ritcey was