

# Proposal Continued—Needs of Islanders

mends that "unless greater attention is given to passenger amenities on board vessels and at terminals in the future, the ferry experience will shift from pleasant to boring to disagreeable for tourists and residents alike." It calls for carpeting on floors and live entertainment during the tourist season.

This would be fine if the Northumberland Strait were the Rhine River or the English Channel, the Irish Sea or even the Atlantic Ocean between Yarmouth and Bar Harbour, Maine. What is important for Islanders is that our transportation problems be solved by issuing a pass to anybody with an Island license plate or by designating certain ferries for Islanders and people travelling without camper trailers and equipment which takes up more than a reasonable amount of space.

Finally, under Transportation, we are hard put to find any justification for the now discussed ferry service between West Prince and New Brunswick. Once again this appears to be proposed for the convenience of tourists and at great cost to the local people.

The development of tourism under Phase I of the Development Plan has probably exhausted most, if not all, of the more promising aspects of tourism. With this in mind we urge the government to seriously consider just what is the saturation point for tourism on P.E.I. We are not impressed with the claim of the featured speaker at a recent P.E.I.T.A. conclave that Prince Edward Island is nowhere near the saturation point in tourism. The Caribbean Islands are seriously questioning their promotion of tourism in an effort to put the

## Hartshorn Cont'd

volts me. He has not looked at the facts, but given a judgement based on a few opinions. Sure the Yearbook and Cadre may suffer some, but it is the Photo Club who has given the executive no chance but to shut down the Photo Club, for if they had not done so, they would be poor administrators, and that is why we elected the executive, to administ-rate.

rights of the local people first. This is being done in Cape Cod, Maine, Sweden Barbados, and a host of other countries. McGill University researchers, L. Hills and Jan O.J. Lundgren, set the limit for tourists per year at a number equal to that of the residents. Given those figures, P.E.I. already has too many tourists for the general well being of the Island.

## Costs of Tourism

The Island is in danger of losing the good qualities for which it is known. We are our own people. Tourism leaves us with the feeling that we're being paid to do what comes natural to us, i.e., being hospitable. We don't have to get paid for that.

The work which is offered by the tourist industry is for the most part poorly paid, domesticating very seasonal, very unproductive, and consists of keeping the place the way the boss wants it.

During the summer Islanders get the distinct impression that our needs are secondary to that of the tourist, who is brought here not on the terms of the local people but on the terms of the Dept. of Tourism. This feeling was aptly described by a delegates from Fiji at an International Seminar held in Vancouver in August

1975. "Like animals in a zoo, the Islander is looked at, but does not profit much thereby." Could it be that we will come to the same conclusion as the Prime Minister of St. Vincent's, that "the tourist dollar is not worth the devastation of the people?" What Prince Edward Island needs is creative forms of development investment, linked with our primary industries of farming and fishing. We do not need service industries or Bricklin type developments. We simply are not big enough to get the maximum benefits out of tourism without destroying our way of life. In 1973 South Africa invested \$7,100 million dollars on a tourist industry which attracted 610,171 people. South Africa did this because it needs foreign exchange. There is no boycott on the Canadian dollar. We cannot afford the kind of investment which tourism requires and that is why the Minister is now seeking DREE loans.

All of this leads us to ask why we have a Ministry of Tourism in the first place? Comparisons with other provinces reveal that we lack some very important departments in our government. Why not replace the Department of Tourism with more important departments such as

Co-operatives, Culture, a full Housing Department or a Department of Human Resources, all of which are more deserving of a full ministry, in our estimation.

Promotion of tourism on small islands from the Caribbean to Hawaii to Fiji has been tried and found to be destructive to the way of life of the people. Why then do we insist of wasting research, talent and money on the promotion of tourism on Prince Edward Island? Does the P.E.I. economy, like the Hawaiian economy, have to be described as a "terminal case" in its vulnerability to unforeseeable changes in tourism?

## Recommendations

We recommend that each of us as Islanders consider the so-called benefits of tourism as opposed to cost, e.g., changing lifestyle, practical implications for Islanders during the summer, increased costs of food, inconvenient ferry connections, emphasis only on tourism "fantasy land" while many of our local people struggle to be heard. We must recognize that the tourist dollar is not worth the devastation of the people. Our concern as Christians must not be directed by individualistic gains, but rather by the needs facing us as a community of people.

