



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF PETER REES,

Q.C., M.P.

I thought you would be interested to see my recent speech on the Channel Tunnel in which I have emphasised once again the hideous problems of the A.2. in our area.

As there is an industrial dispute affecting Hansard and the Official Report has not yet been printed, I enclose the corrected draft of both my speech and Mr. John Peyton's winding up speech in the debate which took place on Friday, 15th June on the Channel Tunnel.

(MR. PETER REES (Dover): In view of Mr. Speaker's plea for short speeches, I hope that the h M for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Sheldon) will forgive me if I do not follow him across the Channel bridge, and that the r h M for Grimsby (Mr. Crosland) will forgive me if I do not follow him down his road to Damascus but, instead, concentrate on the ~~Mr & Mrs & Mr & Mrs & Mr & Mrs~~ ^{m & A2} ~~Mr & Mrs~~ to Dover.

(We appreciate that there are national considerations to be debated. These have been raised, and no doubt they will be raised again by others who do not have such a direct and continuing interest^{as I do} in the Tunnel as a phenomenon in East Kent. I ~~should~~ ^{shall} concentrate on two local considerations that will influence me in coming to a decision.)

(I concede that those ~~two~~ considerations are to a certain extent ~~a~~ contradiction and it is a qn for me to decide how to strike a balance and where. The two considerations are the impact on the environment, and ~~ea~~ the impact on employment in East Kent.)

(On the matter of the environment, my constituents are, and have been for many years, rightly sensitive about the impact of cross Channel traffic. The sad accident at Watersend in my constituency last weekend served to emphasise once again the extent to which people living in and near Dover are exposed to danger even and to a continuous battering of their sensibilities by this cross Channel traffic. My r h F described East Kent as the sump of this country through which the traffic -

my of sensibilities
(MR. PEYTON: My ~~r h~~ and l F must not wrong me in this way. I have said frequently that there is a danger of an attractive and beautiful part of this country being treated as a sump by this almost uncheckable stream of traffic.)

(MR. REES: I apologise to my r h F if I did not quote him exactly. I know ~~of~~ and pay public tribute to his continuing concern for East Kent. We were appreciative of his visit to the area,

and we hope that we shall see much more of him if this project goes ahead. (There is continuing ^{Anxiety} concern about the impact on the environment, and this manifests itself particularly ^{in criticism} in the road system. We are glad that my r h F has decided in favour of the eastern by^{WNS}pass to the port of Dover, a decision that has been taken not a moment too ~~soon~~ soon. No doubt before the summer holidays there will be at least two weekends when traffic ^{in the port} stretches back to Lydden, and even ^{to} Canterbury. That is the kind of problem that we have to consider.

(Will a tunnel ease or increase our problem in East Kent? My r h F has told us of the 43 per cent. increase in lorries and a likely doubling of passenger accompanied cars by 1980. All those factors are of crucial importance to people in and around Dover. Can we be certain that a tunnel will divert traffic, and particularly freight traffic, away from the road ~~system~~ on to the rail system, or will it attract more traffic down to East Kent?

(Will British Railways be able to improve their handling facilities, their services, their platforms, bridges and ^{various other} all the infrastructural ^{points?} ~~points services?~~ Will they be able to offer such a good service at competitive prices that the logic for manufacturers in the North-West, on Merseyside - and I see in the Chamber the h M for Liverpool, West Derby (Mr. Ogden) ⁱⁿ and Birmingham ^{will be} to send their freight by rail rather than by road as they do now?

It is no ~~good~~ good expressing pious hopes that that will be the consequence of building the tunnel. I want to know in more detail what positive steps will be taken to make certain that freight will be channelled away from the road to the rail system.

(We cannot be asked to take a decision about the tunnel in vacuo. It is not a qn whether we have a tunnel or not, or ⁱⁿ of the precise cost of the tunnel. The qn to consider is what would be

the consequences of building the tunnel because it is right that the people of East Kent should know the alternatives ~~xxxx~~ if a tunnel is not constructed.

for instance,
Will there be sufficient capacity in our existing ports and road systems to handle the inevitable increase in traffic by 1980 and 1990? If we do not have a tunnel, will there be a need for extra capacity at Ramsgate? Will my r h F sanction major developments at ~~Bridgham~~ ^{Rich} Bridgeborough? What are the real choices open to us in East Kent in environmental terms?

My r h F ~~the M~~ for Ashford (~~Mr. Deedes~~) (Mr. Deedes) touched on the development of lateral roads. In my view, tunnel or no tunnel, we need lateral roads because heavy lorries switch from the M2/A2 to the M20/A20. *in my constituency, for instance, is now being subjected to* Denton ~~has to carry~~ traffic for which *was not designed* it is not constructed. The country roads have been called upon to carry traffic for which they were not ^{constructed} designed. Tunnel, or no tunnel, what plans has my r h F for our ^{country} lateral roads?

My r h F has shown concern and sensitivity over the works that will be necessary if the tunnel goes through. *But I must tell him that* ~~the estimate~~ of the borehole at ~~the~~ Aycliffe Estate has touched off a certain amount of concern and alarm.

K follows

If that is any example of how the project may proceed, it is not generally felt that there has been adequate ^{consultation} compensation ~~an~~ adequate chance for local sentiment to be ^{tested} ~~set~~. I know that the bore hole itself is not a very large project, but there have been several changes of plan and it ^{if how made} ~~has~~ an impact in Dover.

If the major project goes through, I echo the concern of my h F the M for Ashford (Mr. Deedes) that the statutory procedures ^{may} will ~~not~~ be regarded as sufficient to enable the Govt to dispense with some form of public inquiry. It would not be sufficient for us ^{me} ~~to~~ ^{in Westminster} ~~examine~~ it coolly up here. There must be some opportunity for individuals in East Kent who are likely to be directly or indirectly affected to voice their concern and ^{to} ~~for~~ ^{to} ~~their~~ ^{as} ~~particular~~ problems to be taken into account.

So I hope that there will be some opportunity for a public inquiry. ^{although} I do not suggest to my h F exactly what form that shd take.

As for employment, it is not perhaps generally appreciated by h h s who represent other parts of the country that there is, and has been ^{for some time,} a small but nagging ~~persistent~~ unemployment problem in East Kent, particularly in the towns of Dover, Deal ^{and} Sandwich in my constituency and in ^{the towns of the constituency} ~~that~~ of my h F the M for the Isle of Thanet (Mr. ^{Rees-} ~~Riggs~~ Davies). This unemployment, I am ^h thankful to say, is yielding at last to the Govt's measures, and we appreciate that. We ~~we~~ look forward to an increasing volume of employment and job opportunities. It is not enough just to offer manual jobs; we need a whole range of jobs in East Kent for school leavers.

The single biggest employer or group of employers in my constituency is the port of Dover and the ferry operators and those who provide services connected with the ferries based on the port.

Inevitably, there has been some concern, on the publication of the Economic Consultants' report, that there may be a loss of between 3,000 and 4,000 jobs by 1980 and more by 1990.

I appreciate that that does not mean that the job opportunities will be diminished below those available at present, but it means that the continuing expansion of employment opportunities offered particularly by the port of Dover may be restricted if the channel tunnel is implemented. Perhaps this is not particularly in the Minr's field but we cannot divorce this matter from the tunnel. Perhaps it is more a matter for the Secy of State for Trade and Industry but there are various questions which inevitably arise. What kind of services will be permitted at the station at Cheriton? If a wide range of services were permitted, it would offer opportunities for people from Dover comparable to those that they enjoy at the port.

To proceed with increased services and facilities at Cheriton will militate against those environmental factors to which I have drawn attention, but this is a question of striking a fine balance. What kind of station does my r h F envisage at Cheriton?

Again, shall we have our fair share of office development and industrial development certificates? If there is to be a diminution of opportunities in Dover, there should be some compensating development allowed for and encouraged.

Above all - again, I recognise the possible inconsistency between this point and earlier points of mine - what kind of competition does the Minr envisage between the ferry operators and the tunnel operators? Although, of course, we want to see traffic diverted to the tunnel, the environmental considerations are paramount - none the less, I do not want to see terms of trade so rigged that the ferry operators are driven out of business.

general economic and strategic grounds. So some reassurance here is important.

Although we appreciate that it is not primarily Govt money that will be involved, the Govt are, as it were, the insurer of last resort. They are underwriting the ^{per bond} issue. Therefore, there will always be the temptation, ~~that~~ if, ~~however~~ contrary to the projections of Coopers and Lybrand, the tunnel does not prove a commercial success, ~~there is a tendency~~ to rig trade in favour of the tunnel. That, I would deprecate.

I know that there ^{may be} is a weighty international ^{and national} case for the tunnel, but I am concerned that my constituency should not be asked to bear ^{the} greater part of the cost in environmental and employment terms. On the information available to me - I appreciate that we have had the ~~Economic~~ ⁵ consultants report and the latest blue report from Coopers and Lybrand - ~~some~~ ~~are~~ there are too many unanswered questions, too many hypotheses and too many details, but details of crucial importance, that have not been dealt with. So I hope that the ⁵ use will not be asked to take a decision in a hurry. If it is, I must express this personal warning. I am afraid that the decision may be taken on the basis of ~~emotion~~ emotion and not on a cool appraisal of the facts. A decision based on emotion may not be the decision that my r h F wants, and it ^{may not} ~~not~~ be the right decision for this country.

3.406 (MR. PEYTON) I am grateful to the r h G ~~the M~~ for Sheffield, Park (Mr. Mulley) for the courteous way in which he has spoken on behalf of the Opposition. I remarked at the outset ~~of the debate~~ that the Govt welcome^d this debate as an opportunity to learn something of parlm^y opinion, and it has proved a very useful opportunity. (Opinions on the merits of the tunnel have varied for a long time. Lord Randolph Churchill in a colourful moment, made the remark:

N.P. L

(Bills) "The reputation of England has hitherto depended upon her being, as it were, virgo intacta."

(Mr. Gladstone felt:

(Bills) "It is not so much that I am in favour of the tunnel as I am opposed to the opponents of it."

(It is not always that I find myself overwhelmed by my sympathy for statements made by Mr. Gladstone but on this occasion I find myself in some warm accord with him.

(The r h G commented on the time it took to settle planning appeals. We are not concerned with planning today, but I cannot resist the comment that it has always been my private opinion that planners - and I am not a planner - have laboured under the delusion that they will live for two or three times the allotted span and that, therefore, time is on their side. I can tell the r h G that if we did introduce a Bill, as I have said we would in the event of a favourable decision by the Govt, it would be a short Money Bill and would be introduced by the end of July.

has
in his complaint that he is not got enough information.

I have some sympathy with him over the lack of time to digest it, but if he goes away with a suitable trunk at the weekend with the information already available in it he will be able to spend a very fruitful time and realise that a great many of the qns he has so shrewdly asked are answered there.

I recognise that rail investment is very important. I will certainly look with the railways, as a matter of urgency, at possibilities of their making some early announcement of their plans. Incidentally, it would be my hope to make some announcement about the Govt's plans for the railways before we rise for the Summer Recess.

MR. MULLEY: For the railways in this country?

MR. PEYTON: Yes.

The r h G also asked about consultations with the EEC. These would have to take place. Many ^a/_h Transport Minrs in the Community have already expressed to me their views, or the views of their countries, on this project, and ^h/_h would wish to report the matter to the Commission just as soon as there was a project to be reported, but until the French and British ^{Government's} ~~railways~~ have reached agreement at least on the next stage, to go ahead, I do not think that there is yet anything worth reporting.

JJ fols.

x I am particularly grateful to the r h M for Grimsby (Mr. Crosland) for the way he approached this matter. I welcome most of what he said. I believe that on the question of the raising of money with Govt guarantee there is a certain amount of highly misleading advice in orbit. Some of it has come my way too. I believe the position is that it would not be necessary in law for there to be a Govt guarantee, ^{and} with a long protracted operation very much of a public ~~character~~ character, It is unlikely that money would be raised very easily, particularly on the Continent, in support of such a project except at an exorbitant rate of interest.

x My r h F the M for Ashford (Mr. Deedes) and my h and l F the M for Dover (Mr. Peter Rees) both made very discerning speeches. My h and l F faces problems in his constituency, and I want to say how much I appreciate the restrained attitude he takes on these difficult problems and also the concern he always shows to reflect the interests of his constituents to me. The same goes for my h F the M for Folkestone (Mr. Costain), who, ~~is~~ under a vow of silence, ~~is~~ has been sitting behind me. He finds ~~it~~ himself readily released from these vows as soon as he leaves the Chamber. My h F the M for Maidstone (Mr. Wells) made comments about the beauties of Folkestone. He does not seem to have fully appreciated those beauties. I had the utmost difficulty in restraining my h F the M for Folkestone from leaving his seat, and I would advise my h F the M for Maidstone to keep away from him.

x If the h M for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Sheldon) will ~~not~~ forgive me, I will not answer him at length. I am aware of his arguments and his concern that alternatives have not been adequately considered. I hope he will do me the favour of reading what I said.

acknowledgement of the fact that I saw him and Professor Baker.

I was grateful to have the support of the h M for Liverpool, West Derby (Mr. Ogden) and of my h F the M for Cheltenham (Sir D. Dodds-Parker), who has been for so long such a staunch supporter of the project and in the course of a very short speech allowed some sign of his support to creep in towards the end. I am grateful to him.

I have already answered the point raised by the h M for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Tope) re about consultation with the EEC. I would only add that I thought it was really my duty to consult the House of Commons before I went about consulting a mass of ^Scontinental bodies not immediately concerned with the problem.

I was very grateful for the support of the h M for Glasgow, Woodside (Mr. Carmichael). Perhaps he would be kind enough to advise the r h M for Grimsby on the state of Scottish opinion. I do not think that the r h G was here when the h G made his speech, but the h G said that he had heard widely expressed opinions in Scotland that the Tunnel could do no harm to Scottish industry and might even be of considerable benefit.

To my h F the M for Croydon, South (Sir R. Thompson) I can only express very great sympathy. The destruction of his house and the almost similar fate which he apprehends for his constituency is indeed a dark prospect. But I think he at some stages in his speech allowed himself to stray ever so little over the boundary which separates moderate statement from hyperbole.

KK folls.

(Mr. Peyton spkg)

A parking lot for juggernaut lorries as the ultimate fate for Kent is, I suggest, a slight exaggeration. Moreover, it remains the Govt's hope that, if the tunnel is built, Kent will be spared something of that fate. However, I assure my h F that I understand his apprehensions and, even if he does not ultimately get satisfaction over his house, it will ~~certainly~~ be my hope to satisfy him that every effort which can be made to assist his constituency will most certainly be taken.

The h M for Kingston upon Hull East (Mr. Prescott) made several points on behalf of the shipping industry, as did my h F the M for Dorset, West (Mr. Wingfield Digby). The h M mentioned his association with the National Union of Seamen. If that union would care to ~~bring~~ ^{bring} a deputation to see me to express ~~his~~ ^{its} views on this subject, I shall be very ready to receive it at any time. As ~~the~~ regards the shipping industry, also, I am sure that the Chamber of Shipping will be the first to admit that I have pressed upon it opportunities to come and express its views to me, and I now repeat publicly that it will be welcome at any time to do

The main points and anxieties expressed by r h and h Ms have concerned the diversion of road traffic to rail, the planning of the railway link, the question whether a tunnel is necessary at all, and the desire that the expression of local opinion should be adequately met. The Hse has been concerned also about the environment and about regional ~~problems~~ ^{issues}, as well as about the timing of further steps. I shall now endeavour to deal as well as I can with some of those matters.

First, ~~on the question of diversion of traffic to rail,~~ ^{current road} the consultants expect that 60 per cent of ~~the~~ freight going through ~~to and from the Continent will go through~~ the tunnel will be rail freight. I am currently discussing with ~~the~~ ^{the} British Railways and means of increasing the amount of freight using

the tunnel. incidentally, in response to the point raised about discrimination in relation to the various kinds of traffic using the tunnel, I should emphasise that the operating authority will be under constraints not to inhibit the use of the tunnel by any particular traffic, road or rail. It does not mean that the Govt ^{are} ~~is~~ free to do whatever they like.

[Now, the question of railway planning. The final planning will await the decision to go ahead, and will then take place over the following 12 months at the same time as the £28 million programme of work to which I referred in my opening speech.

LL folls

(If h and r h Ms will look at some of the documents that have been produced ^{and} at some of the traffic figures, and will ponder on some of those to which I referred this morning, I do not believe that they will seriously challenge the need for additional transport facilities. Some may even conclude that the tunnel ~~could~~ could play a useful part in meeting that need, which will not just go away.

(The regional aspect raises qns which I would not wish to answer briefly at the end of a debate. It is something which the Govt take seriously and will certainly seek to deal with fully in any White Paper accompanying the announcement of the Govt's decision.

I would be wrong if I sought to ignore the remarks made on both sides of the Hse about the timing of the following steps. What I said in my opening speech was that the Govt are now considering, because there is no point in hanging about all the material available to them and to the Hse as a matter of urgency in an attempt to reach a conclusion ^{on} ~~as to~~ whether this great project should be advanced by a further stage.

(If the decision were affirmative the Govt would wish to announce that decision before the end of July in a White Paper and at the same time publish the short Money Bill ^{a matter for me and the hse} to which I referred. ~~I am not~~ ^{the Hse. I am not} suggesting that ~~my r h F~~ ^{he} the Leader of the Hse would wish to see such a Bill railroaded through. I am certain that the Govt will take due note of what has been said by all h and r h Ms about the need to avoid undue haste. I hope in return that the Hse will take note of the point I tried to make this morning that projects of this kind simply cannot be put in cold storage for a year as my h ^{the M for Faversham} (Mr. Moate) asked.