

towns and villages of this country.

Mr. StarkesI understand that I do not enjoy the ancient rights and privileges that I once did when I was an elected representative during responsible government. I know I can be sued for making statements contrary to the law of the land, but my first statement on roads in this country is this. It is my firm opinion that practically all roads built so far have been undertaken through pull with the government in power at the time. The report should make the head of every member of this Convention hang in shame, to see how such large sums collected from all over the country have been spent on such small territory as the Avalon Peninsula. I feel ashamed after reading this report, and seeing how and where the hard-earned revenue collected from the actual producers of this country has been spent; and in the same spirit I feel that the men sent here by other districts, including the men representing the districts that have received such great benefits, actually do feel ashamed, when they see how unfairly the majority of them has been treated. I must refer to a statement made yesterday by Mr. Gordon Higgins.... His statement hit me hard, and I am compelled to take exception to it. He said, when talking on roads, "Avalon first and the rest of the country after. We bow the knee to nobody as far as that is concerned." I certainly give Mr. Higgins great credit for making that statement. Is there anything he could say that would make him more popular on the Avalon Peninsula? But are we, the representatives sent here by the actual producers, the actual salt of the earth (and we all know what that means) from the districts where roads are unknown, are we going to come here ... and still allow that thing to go on — "Avalon first and the rest of the country afterwards"? Gentlemen, if all were of my mind, we would see that it would be equal rights for all, and not special rights for the Avalon.

I am surprised that the remarks of Mr. Higgins did not provoke some discussion.... Mr. Higgins said that the St. John's members were not hanging their heads in shame over the tremendous sums of money that had gone out to give St. John's and neighbourhood all these roads. I come from a district where there are more people with broken legs and arms, broken by falling over rocks and boulders, than any other district in the country.... What do we find when it comes to

productive industries in this country? You find that the great bulk of these industries are in those parts of the country that have got practically no roads. It is not in St. John's that you find the bulk of our great fisheries. It's not in St. John's that you find the great bulk of our forests, or of our other productive industries. It's out around the country, where little or no government money is being spent on roads. Where would St. John's be and what roads would they have, if we took the fisheries away from them? If we took the great Buchans mine away from them? If we took the great Grand Falls industry away from them? If they didn't have the great Corner Brook and Humber Valley to depend on? These are the things that keep St. John's going. Suppose we divided Newfoundland into two separate countries — the Avalon Peninsula forming one country, and the rest of Newfoundland and Labrador forming another. Where would the Avalon Peninsula be then? Who would have most of the roads in that case? It wouldn't be the Avalon Peninsula. If you took a photograph of the Avalon from the air, what you'd get would be a big web with a spider in the middle of it — and the spider would be St. John's. I am not advocating that Newfoundland be separated into two countries. I am advocating that the rest of the country should get a good share of whatever money is going for roads and other public improvements.... Before they build more beautiful paved roads around Conception Bay they should first see that the people of the rest of the island get half-decent roads to travel over and transport their produce. I hope Mr. Higgins won't think that I am making an attack upon him or upon his St. John's colleagues, or upon the members who come here from Avalon Peninsula districts. All I am trying to do is to put in a claim for the rest of the island....

Mr. Higgins I think it would be rather discourteous to say the least of it, if I did not answer our friend across the way. I want to make my position quite clear in the matter. Yesterday the convenor of the Committee was a little worried about having no comment on his report. He has harped on the fact that the Avalon was getting so much money, and because of that suggestion, I suppose Mr. Starkes and our other good friend Mr. Vincent over there, have taken to heart the insinuation that this highroad was built for the people in