

There is another aspect of the case that appeals to me strongly, especially for the last ten or twelve years, since I have frequently visited Northern British Columbia and Alaska, and that is the feasibility of extending the Pacific Great Eastern through the Peace River Country through the Yukon and thence to Alaska. If any person ten years ago had seriously committed himself to a statement that railroad construction of any considerable magnitude in Alaska would be feasible or commercially possible, he must at once have been condemned as a most irresponsible person. It was the habit at that time to refer to the Far North as, perhaps, a section of country reserved by Providence for the big game hunter.

I believe that the time has now come for the building of a railroad through Northern British Columbia to the Yukon and Alaska, and I may say that the authorities at Washington and Ottawa have both gone so far as to heartily endorse some project of co-operation in the building of this line. The extension of the Pacific Great Eastern into the Peace River Country will make a splendid initial step towards the construction of a North and South railway. From Fort George the line will go directly North to the Parsnip River, and this section of the line might ultimately be used as the first step in the proposed extension to Alaska.

The building of this railway would effectually put Alaska on the map not only so far as the United States is concerned, but also so far as British Columbia is concerned, and at the same time it would link up a vast intervening territory of tremendous productive value. British Columbia occupies the unique position of being located between parts of the great Union of this continent, both to the North and the South, and, while the construction of this arterial line opens up tremendous possibilities for our cousins beyond the boundary line, yet we must not forget that it would develop country where enormous potential wealth is in the Northern area of this Province, and, incidentally, do more than anything else to cement the friendship and amity of the two great nations of this continent.

It seems to me that the Hon. Franklin K. Lane, Minister of the Interior for the United States, made an epoch in national, and even international, history when he secured the passage of a

bill appropriating \$35,000,000 for the development of a national railway system for Alaska. I have attempted to cultivate interest in the British Columbia-Yukon road, and since this Province is bound to profit materially by its construction, where should there be more interest in the matter than here in British Columbia?

Of course I wish it to be understood that the project for the Province to take up in a single handed manner at the present time is too expensive, but in saying that I am admitting the only possible reason for not pressing the project forward at once. The matter at present lies in the hands of the Governments at Washington and Ottawa, and it is in their power to give life to this idea and secure its splendid fulfilment within the next five years. I do not wish to be understood as promulgating a political platform on this subject. To my mind there is no reason in the world why Liberals and Conservatives alike should not combine on this great issue and press forward the undertaking to the utmost of their power. It is a matter of record that in connection with the Hudson Bay Railway, members of both parties were agreed as to the justification for the line, and it was largely through their united effort that the project became an accomplished fact. I do not hesitate to say, however, that the opening of the British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska Railroad will be ten times more valuable than the completion of the Hudson Bay line. We pride ourselves on the Northern area of our Province, but what good is it all to us if it is left undeveloped, and I claim that development can only take place by the extension of our North and South lines.

In a very short time we shall be celebrating the Centenary of Peace on this continent. I regard that as a great and inspiring epoch, and I would like to say in connection with it that I can imagine no more fitting way of celebrating this festival than by the consummation of the arrangements of rights involved in a project to undertake the construction of a line under a joint high commission.

It is a good thing for us to hold sacred some shrine in old England, to erect a tablet in the crypt of St. Paul's or to make other proper monuments and memorials, but to my mind nothing could be more lasting or impressive as