

when it is possible to inspire a whole community to exercise its rights and powers of free enterprise, and its initiative.

The people of the Cariboo and of the Peace River decided more than twenty years ago, after a careful analysis of their economic position, what was the first step to be taken in developing their country and making it possible for them to earn a living on the farms of that land, and they came to the government and are still coming with their plea that this step be taken. To-day they are still the forgotten people.

That area was settled very largely on the strength of promises that were made to build this railway, and I think it is only fair to say that the party in power to-day was not the only party that made those promises. Every leader of the major parties of the country is on record, committed to the hilt to build this railroad. I pointed out last year that the Prime Minister himself, speaking in Edmonton in 1924, unequivocally pledged himself to build a road as soon as humanly possible. I do not know what the Prime Minister thinks is humanly possible, but that was a long time ago, and surely it is approximating human possibility by now.

Other leaders, such as the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen, Lord Bennett, the present leader of the opposition (Mr. Bracken), and, I believe, the leaders of the other parties in this house, have pledged themselves to support the building of the Peace River outlet. I suggest, therefore, that this house and the government as well have a moral obligation to the people of the Peace River and the Cariboo. I do not know to what extent a moral obligation is going to count in this parliament, but I think it ought to count. I am suggesting that we make it count, because it is the obligation of each one of us.

Those people went in there more than a quarter of a century ago on the strength of promises that a railroad would be built to take out their produce and convey it to market. They are still there, isolated within a vast territory filled with immeasurable wealth, and they are knocking on the door to be let out. This government and parliament alone hold the key that can open that door, and that key is transportation which will enable those people to find a market for their produce to the extent that their developments increase settlements, and to develop the natural resources to which I have already referred.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. I must remind the hon. member that his time has expired.

Mr. H. C. GREEN (Vancouver South): I am very glad to support this resolution both on my own behalf and on behalf of the Progressive Conservative party. There can be no doubt in the mind of any hon. member who knows the situation that the Peace River district is severely handicapped by lack of a railway outlet to the Pacific coast. Further, as the member for Cariboo (Mr. Irvine) has said, that condition has existed over a period of almost thirty years.

There is no other area in Canada of like size that has been so unfortunate. The situation really is and has been a great tragedy. The people there moved in after the last war, and many of them have held on continuously until this time in the expectation that there would be a rail outlet to the Pacific coast. Many of the original settlers have died; others have been forced to give up their farms, quite a few have moved down to the Pacific coast. Right through the picture they have shown great courage and strength of character. Now that the war is over the time has come for this parliament to go to the aid of the people of the Peace River district. They should have a rail outlet to the Pacific coast at Prince Rupert, and also at Vancouver and New Westminster.

Another tragedy has been the failure to develop the country along the Canadian National line from Jasper to Prince Rupert, in the centre of the province of British Columbia. Much of that land is fertile, yet the people there have had to struggle along with inadequate railway service. Just a few weeks ago I believe their service was again reduced. They have had handicap after handicap, and they too deserve some help from this parliament.

I know the government of British Columbia is only too anxious to cooperate in getting an outlet to the Pacific coast. The provincial government has a railroad which runs from Squamish on Howe Sound up to Quesnel, and is prepared to complete it into Prince George where it could connect with a line from the Peace River district. The whole province of British Columbia is behind the plan of opening up the Peace River district to the Pacific coast.

In the summer of 1944 the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bracken) toured that country from Prince Rupert to Prince George, down to Quesnel, and then flew into the Peace River country. As he left the province he made a statement which among other things dealt with this Peace River outlet. He said:

The development of British Columbia's rich north country must be one of our first projects in the post-war era. I have already stated that