

*Trans-Canada Highway Act*

the people there in provincial voting followed the proper course which the people in the rest of Canada took in 1957.

But this alone is not the whole story. Very recently agreements were signed to provide \$7.5 million to each of those provinces for roads to resources, and this again is of very special benefit to areas where the tax raising potential is not high, and in particular the area of the Atlantic provinces. So that in effect we have met, and I think met very effectively, the objections made by hon. members when they were in opposition which were quoted and read into the record by the Leader of the Opposition when he took part in this debate a day or so ago.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Would the hon. member for Halifax permit a question? Is the hon. member for Halifax, as a representative of the Atlantic provinces, satisfied with the contribution the federal government is now making toward the trans-Canada highway?

**An hon. Member:** That is not a fair question.

**Mr. McCleave:** I think it is considering the source.

**Mr. Monteith (Perth):** He was satisfied prior to 1957.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I was not.

**Mr. McCleave:** I suggest that the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member from Newfoundland who preceded me in this debate—doubtless other hon. members from Newfoundland can be expected to follow me—simply show that remorse and repentance can work wonders, particularly when you are in opposition.

I think these points should be made clear, otherwise the people could get the impression that the Atlantic provinces have special needs and special arguments which are not being met. I say that we do have these special needs; we do have these special arguments which were fairly pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition. But I would definitely quarrel with him in the proposal he has made, and I say that the government is not only recognizing those needs but has gone a long, long way toward meeting them. That is something which the hon. members in opposition can well ponder upon before they make this kind of suggestion.

I return briefly to another matter, namely consideration of the trans-Canada highway system. I hope that when the final link is completed from coast to coast some thought will be given to providing additions to it. My own city of Halifax, for example, does not enjoy a position on the trans-Canada

highway, but 60 miles of pavement would overcome that difficulty. I think we people in the Atlantic provinces would be better advised to save our arguments on the completion of the first trans-Canada highway to ensure that we are not put in a bad bargaining position should a second trans-Canada highway system be considered or, as I say, additions are made to the first one.

**Mr. Howard:** On rising to participate in this discussion during the resolution stage, may I say at the outset that I was extremely interested in the proposal made by the Leader of the Opposition and other members of the Liberal party. I would imagine that if the former prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent, is still a member of the Liberal party, he could properly classify himself as a Liberal in a hurry. These new views which the Liberal party has adopted indicate how stimulating is defeat in the promotion of the imagination; except, I may say, that the official opposition is four or five years too late in reaching these conclusions about the deficiency of their proposals concerning the trans-Canada highway when they were in office. However, I will say, also, that the government should now cease the practice of taking something which the Liberal party did when they were in office and extending it a few years. It seems that the Conservative party is not using the grey matter between its ears and is merely content to stumble along continuing what the Liberal party did during its years of office.

In any event, the request indicated in the resolution is acceptable as far as I am concerned. I have some complaints to make about the financial conditions attached to the building of the trans-Canada highway and with regard to certain other matters with which I will deal in a moment. If I may, I will first make reference to the report of the proceedings under the Trans-Canada Highway Act for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1959, which was submitted by the Minister of Public Works to the Governor General, and read a few lines from it. At the top of page 2 it says:

The progress of construction during the 1958 season was generally satisfactory with most provinces proceeding with the work at an accelerated pace in order to ensure that travel will be possible on a paved road over the entire highway mileage by December, 1960. This may be so in all provinces except Newfoundland—

I ask the minister to consider seriously whether in future reports of this nature he should not be more truthful with regard to the impression he leaves with the general public and with the house. I am quite sure that when this was reported and when it