

*Trans-Canada Highway*

Of course, he is wrong in that statement; that road was started before Mr. Lyons was Minister of Lands and Forests.

And so soon are things forgotten, I have heard it claimed that Ontario and Manitoba had not agreed upon a meeting place. This is not so. The surveyors of the two provinces did not meet with the precision of the Simplon tunnel, but came within measurable distance of each other. There need be no difficulty here. The point is settled, although some newspapers, not going editorially deep enough into the facts, seem to forget that.

So that we have Mr. Pitt almost despairing of the possibility of getting this highway, and taking some of the editorial writers in that part of the country to task. I am sure I do not need to mention who they are. One particular gentleman who was a candidate—in fact, he was the legislative representative in Ontario—never writes an editorial on the highway, lately at least, without misrepresenting the whole situation. And that, I may say, is one of the reasons why to-day he is not a member of the Ontario legislature for that riding.

I shall read presently an extract from the Dryden Observer of July 17, 1930. Apparently the whole aspect of this matter has changed. Every speaker in the Conservative ranks taking part in the election campaign in northern Ontario—this was particularly the case in my own riding—endeavoured to misrepresent my position. I have the records of their statements. The whole aspect of the situation, I say, has changed. In the campaign it was no longer a provincial undertaking. Even some of the gentlemen whom I have quoted, who had stated that it was a provincial undertaking with which the federal government had nothing to do, whether that government was Liberal or Conservative, took a different attitude in 1930, declaring then that it was a dominion undertaking. These gentlemen changed their opinion, saying that it was a federal obligation and that the highway would never be constructed until there was a change of government at Ottawa. Let me quote from a writer in the Dryden Observer of July 17, 1930:

Premier Howard G. Ferguson, in his effort to make political capital in the present campaign, tells us he is ready to go fifty-fifty with the federal government in the cost of construction of the highway in this riding, and he and his henchmen, among them Hon. Wm. Finlayson, who was here recently, attack the King administration for not accepting this offer and permitting the work to proceed, thereby affording employment. Manitoba, the prairie provinces and British Columbia each went ahead with their sections and completed them without delay. But Premier Ferguson holds out for fifty-fifty split.

[Mr. Heenan.]

I placed on the order paper a motion which was carried by the house, asking for the correspondence between the government of Ontario and any member of the federal government; and while there were returns from every department of the federal government, there was not one syllable, not one line of communication as between the two governments indicating any request for assistance or for a fifty-fifty split.

The election was fought in our part of the country chiefly on the highways. The Conservatives gained two seats in that part of the country mainly on the promise of that highway, and I am glad now to be in a position to supplement what was said by the hon. member for North Timiskaming (Mr. Bradette), and the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Hurtubise). With those hon. gentlemen, I would ask the government to implement their promise and to do so immediately. It is a shame to think that in a beautiful country such as we have in northern Ontario we should be denied a highway to enable the people to communicate with the rest of the world. Moreover, there are people outside looking for scenic beauty, a lovely country such as we have there, with delightful lakes, forests, fishing and game of all kinds. These people are anxious to spend some of their money there and they cannot because of the political manoeuvring of about six gentlemen or so up in my part of the country. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, in view of the definite pledge made by the Conservatives in my riding during the campaign, and the different promises, as I have outlined them, made by the present Prime Minister, that the government should make some pronouncement as to whether or not they intend to carry out these promises. They should let us know whether they are going to proceed with the construction of that highway as they pledged themselves to do or whether they have changed their minds and intend to make a contribution to the provinces by way of assistance. Whatever course they follow, whether by contribution to the provinces or by undertaking the whole thing themselves, they will have my support.

As regards the route from the head of the lakes to the Manitoba boundary, the question is settled as to the route. The people themselves have agreed upon the route and have so represented to the Ontario government. Whether they sent copies to this government, I do not know. But the present federal government ought not now to seek further excuses on the ground that there are representations from different parts of the country