

a considerable asset on the credit side of the exchequer and provide a much needed public service to the people concerned. I believe that such public investment will very soon become necessary; and, frankly, I believe that the only possible hope of the people of the Peace River and the Cariboo securing this line is through the implementing of the government's policy of post-war rehabilitation. For that reason I would like very much to have, in the course of this debate, the assurance, either of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) himself, or of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Chevrier), who will probably speak for the government on this resolution, or through some spokesman, that the Peace River outlet will have a priority on the programme of the government in its post-war reconstruction work.

By way of an example I should like to invite the attention of the government and of the house to what is taking place in Great Britain along similar lines at the present time. In this connection I would mention the case of Middlesborough, which I found referred to in an interesting article in the last issue of the *Reader's Digest*. There will be found the story of how the government of Middlesborough hired architects, geographers, designers and sociologists to make a complete analysis of living conditions within the city borders. To assist them they found ready cooperation on the part of the chamber of commerce, industrialists, housewives, teachers, doctors, trades unions, shop-keepers, and indeed all groups within the community; all were ready to cooperate, and together they fearlessly and realistically analysed the situation of the city. This self-inventory became the basis of a plan to rebuild the entire city of Middlesborough, and to rebuild it in a period of thirty years, taking three definite stages to complete the plan. The city government was and is responsible for carrying out the plan, but the British nation has an interest in Middlesborough, and because of that interest we found present at this analysis four ministers of the national government. They were there to support the local community with the financial resources of the state in carrying out the plans upon which the community itself had decided. There were there the minister of education, the minister of health, the minister of transport, and the minister of town and county planning. They were there to give leadership and advice and to supervise the carrying out of the plan in accordance with national standards. The government of Britain was behind the Middlesborough city plan in order to provide the required financial aid. Thus the authority, the advice and the

[Mr. Irvine.]

funds of the nation entered into partnership with the initiative and the enterprise of all elements in the community.

In using this case as an example I do not mean to imply that our government is less competent to undertake great and costly projects than the government of Great Britain. This government's record during the war period in its production of war material and supplies is a noble one, and should be sufficient answer to anyone who might have any doubt that the government of this country was less competent than governments in other countries. I for one do not question the government's ability to do the job, but I am questioning its willingness to try. I find that the British government is on the job supporting the plans of each local community, so far as rehabilitation is concerned, by putting behind those plans the financial resources of the nation.

The city of Middlesborough is a comparatively small affair when one thinks of the vast territory and the wealth of which I have spoken, within the Cariboo and the great Peace River country and the Northwest Territories. That area of the Peace River and the Cariboo is about twice the size of the United Kingdom, and I feel safe in saying that the natural resources of the Cariboo and the Peace River is greater than that of the entire British Isles. Surely with such an attractive proposal the government of Canada will not be loath to support the plans that have been made for twenty years by the people of the Peace River and the Cariboo, by advancing the necessary capital to build their means of transportation.

I do not hesitate to say that this district of which I am speaking is rich enough in natural resources to employ gainfully every returned soldier in Canada, if the government were sufficiently interested to give leadership and to finance whatever projects might be required to develop those natural resources. What then is to be the answer of this parliament and of the government to the plea of the people of the Cariboo and of the Peace River, which plea I now bring before this house.

I have just said that in the case of Middlesborough the government representatives were there on the job to stimulate every spark of initiative in the community, to stimulate this free enterprise of which we hear so much. I would point out to the government that there are hundreds of communities in the territory of which I have been speaking who would gladly respond to any appeal which the government might make in this regard, and no one can possibly estimate what can result