

bodies, will come before the Government to express the views of what they think to be the great majority of the people of this country on the subject of waterway improvements. In the meantime, I have been requested to draw to the attention of this House to the necessity of seeking an immediate remedy for the unsolved problem of water transportation by constructing an all Canadian deep waterway from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic ocean.

For over half a century this important question has been freely discussed in the press and, on several occasions, within the walls of Parliament; but up to the present day the interest of the nation at large has been sacrificed to local and even foreign interests and to parochial ambitions. And what has been the result? The western and eastern provinces, each possessing exchangeable commodities and products, have remained commercially separated. The surplus of our western productions and our export trade in general have been prevented from following the channel traced by nature itself, and a great portion of every Canadian crop is distributed for consumption from United States ports, to the prejudice of our interprovincial trade and of our national unity.

In order to reclaim our trade from the American republic and establish a great national water traffic, various routes have been suggested; but the best engineers and the most reliable authorities on transportation have advocated the French river from lake Huron up to lake Nipissing, and thence the Mattawa river down to the St. Lawrence. This route is commonly referred to as the Georgian Bay Canal, a wrong appellation, in my opinion, to describe that immense stretch of navigable waters requiring only 28 miles of canal excavation to offset its natural obstacles.

Party politics have assumed such an important role in the economical life of this country, that it may not be out of place to say a few words as to the political aspect of this question. The most eminent statesmen of both political parties have considered that great national enterprise of such importance for the welfare of the country and the prosperity of its inhabitants, that they have all endorsed it, and for that reason I feel that my proposition should find support from the Treasury benches and from the members of the Opposition as well. There is not a man in this House who will not admit that amongst the political men who have associated their names and their memory with the material

progress of this country, very few have been more farsighted and more Canadian in their policies than the late Sir John A. Macdonald. Speaking on the subject of transportation, he expressed his views in the following utterance:

The Ottawa canal and the Pacific railway must be constructed and no voice would be raised against the great national work which would open the western states and colonies to the seaboard.

That progressive statesman always considered the construction of the Canadian Pacific railway and that of the Georgian Bay canal as being the great twin enterprises of the nation. One of these enterprises was achieved during the lifetime of Sir John A. Macdonald, and now it is up to this Government, his descendant in direct line and the guardian of his succession, to fulfil the unexecuted part of his political will. The Honourable Alexander Mackenzie, while he was member for the county of East York in 1876, made the following statement:

The very first year I was in Parliament, I was one of a committee appointed to investigate the question of canal navigation on the upper Ottawa, and from that time I have been perfectly satisfied that the valley presents the greatest facilities of any route upon the continent for the transportation of products of the northwest to the Atlantic ocean, or rather, I should say, to the head of Atlantic navigation.

The right hon. the Prime Minister, when he was leader of the Opposition, also put himself on record in favour of the principle of the Georgian Bay canal when he defined and reaffirmed, as follows, the policy of the Conservative party in matters of transportation:

Our object is to keep Canadian trade in Canadian channels and to continue as much as we can the policy of making that trade run east and west.

The present leader of the Opposition has also, on different occasions, given his support to the project and one cannot use plainer words than those he used in reply to a delegation of the Montreal city council a few years ago:

I cannot conceive of any two views on the subject of construction. The route is naturally the great outlet of the west, nor can I see any rival of the canal.

Many other politicians of renown, Liberals and Conservatives, have expressed similar views, but I have quoted a sufficient number to conclude that the action which I expect the Government to take in this matter should not be handicapped or de-