

I trust that this will meet the requirements of the situation at the present time, and as I understand the Ontario Minister of Lands, Hon. Mr. Bowman, is to visit your district very shortly, this will be in the nature of an assurance as to the location of the proposed road.

I am in receipt of correspondence from Mr. Wydeman, of the Kenora Examiner and Mr. Cornish of the Canada Colonization and Highway Association, and copies of this letter are being forwarded to each of these gentlemen.

Yours faithfully,

C. D. McPherson,
Minister of Public Works.

So there was no doubt in our minds that there was a definite arrangement between the two governments to meet at mile post 24. Indeed, in 1926, one of the Conservative candidates for the provincial house, Mr. J. P. Earngey, issued a statement to the electors in which he said:

If elected, I propose to join forces with the members for Rainy River, Fort William and Port Arthur for the rapid completion of the portion of the trans-Canada highway from Fort William west; and for the construction at once of the highway to Fort Frances to tap at that point the great tourist traffic from the United States which is waiting to flow this way.

So the government candidate had no thought whatever that this highway would be built only on condition that the federal government contributed anything to it. As a matter of fact, until the approach of the last federal election there never was a suggestion from any point that the federal government should contribute one red cent to the cost of the construction of that highway through that portion of the country. Mayor Webb of Winnipeg, a very pronounced Conservative, took issue with a Liberal during the campaign of 1926, and in a letter to the Fort Frances Times under date of August 26, 1926, he said:

We must all work together and the man or women or any political party or any organization that in any way, shape or form, tries to create or breed friction, deserve to be shown by the people at large that they will have nothing to do with them whatsoever.

Neither of the parties at Ottawa have anything to do with the local problem of a highway between Winnipeg and Kenora, or in the great development of this wonderful area.

So here we have a very pronounced Conservative taking a Liberal to task because he suggested a federal contribution. Of course it is true that Mayor Webb changed his views during the last election and joined with a good many others in misrepresenting the position of the Liberals, and particularly my own position, in connection with the trans-Canada highway.

A few moments ago I quoted Mr. Lyons, who was Minister of Lands and Forests in

1924. As hon. members will recall, Mr. Lyons resigned and was succeeded by Mr. Finlayson. In the Kenora Examiner of September 16, 1927, we have this statement by Mr. Finlayson:

The government propose, after the completion of the Ferguson highway, this year, to devote more money and attention to the roads in the northwestern part of the province. The development from Port Arthur and Fort William to the Manitoba boundary requires attention, and during the next year or two the roads in this section of the province call for very considerable improvement.

Then we have ex-Mayor Toole, of Kenora, another very pronounced Conservative—and in passing I might say one of the most decent Conservatives in northern Ontario—speaking at a banquet in honour of Mr. Finlayson at Kenora. Mr. Toole was selected to present to Mr. Finlayson the views of the people in that part of the country with respect to many matters. In connection with the highway, I find the following comment, in the Kenora Examiner of August 26, 1927:

Why can we not have a road to Dryden? Why should we not be connected up with that part of our own district? Only about forty-five miles of construction are needed to link us up to that thriving agricultural section who need the road as much as we. Dryden and Kenora, two good towns, and many smaller communities cut off from each other. Hon. James Lyons, on a visit some years ago, promised it; yet the road is not built.

You have said that a road from the south would bring in foreign wealth, not only tourists but some ready to invest as well. Much of the country around Toronto itself was built up by visitors who were quick to see an opportunity. Money expended on highways here will bring enough tourists to give returns that not only pay for maintenance but construction as well.

The automobile has revolutionized everything in the last few years. We hear of roads being built all around us, but so far only twenty-two miles has been built for Kenora. We in this district are loyal to Ontario, but to-day unfortunately there is much dissatisfaction against the government for the lack of progress in this section.

Those are the words of one of the leading Conservatives of that section of the country. Anyone who knows Mr. Toole will agree that he is one of the most far-seeing gentlemen in northern Ontario, and a man who is always boosting his district. Then we had the president of the Central Canada Highways Association, Mr. Alfred Pitt, who was invited to address the Kenora Rotary Club. He is reported in the Kenora Examiner of November 30, 1928, as follows:

Well, we spent a good deal of time and money, and finally Mr. Lyons started what now is the road to within twelve miles of the Manitoba boundary.