

*Trans-Canada Highway*

of this matter that under no circumstances should he create a commission with respect to the route of the trans-Canada highway. If he does so he will then be in the difficulty of having all these local geographical positions urged upon him by the members of the commission who of course must come from various parts of the country, and naturally will have the colouring, may I say, of the geographical section from which they come. The problem before us surely is one to be settled by the provinces, and I think that has been the policy of the federal government.

I was greatly interested in an announcement made in Edmonton a short time ago by one who recently occupied the position of minister of mines and resources in this government, and who has now gone to that other place. I assure the minister I do not mean he is dead, but he has gone to that other place. He announced that the matter had been settled some time ago in so far as western Canada was concerned, and that the highway would run via Walsh, Medicine Hat, Calgary, and so on. I greatly sympathize with the hon. member for Edmonton East (Mr. Macdonald) in his endeavour to have the highway built over those swamps extending for 200 miles between Edmonton and Jasper. I have the greatest sympathy with him.

When we speak of a trans-Canada highway being used by tourists, what do tourists come to see? They come to see scenery. The suggestion that any tourist from eastern Canada or the United States should take some highway which avoided Banff and Jasper is on a par with the suggestion that you might as well give your son or your son-in-law the money to visit England for six months and tell him to be sure not to go near London. If he is going to India you may as well tell him to see India, to see Delhi, but under no circumstances should he ever take a look at the Taj Mahal. The matter is just that simple and so utterly ridiculous.

The difficulty is that in the city of Edmonton and the northern part of Alberta members of my party, as well as other hon. members, all ran their election campaigns on one ground, namely, that the highway should not go through Calgary. They adopted that position unanimously. They all knew the situation perfectly well—they had run out of stuff or something of that kind—and the hon. senator certainly knew it at that time when he had charge of the general campaign there. I well remember that a great friend of mine, and a member of my own party, put great advertising splashes in an Edmonton paper saying that if we were

elected the highway would go through Edmonton. It cost me several hundred dollars to answer him. They were not elected but I was, and I want to assure him and all the Edmonton people that in spite of the eloquence which was wasted on their desert air—and I use the word quite advisedly—we all knew that the matter had been settled by the Alberta government.

What did we do in Alberta? We were reasonable. We simply joined the governments of Saskatchewan and British Columbia in a most co-operative way and said: You are coming in here and you are coming in there. Certainly we will continue the straight line, which of course we are doing, and thus show the people all the beauties of the Rocky mountains which are not visible on any other route, and I have travelled them all. We are most co-operative. We are doing everything we can to assist the minister, and we will keep on assisting him just as long as he keeps his nose out of our business and lets us tell him where the highway is going. Why shouldn't we? When he is finished who will own it? Are we going to end with a highway in that province owned by somebody else? That is really what the matter is about.

It is a great thing to live in that country; the spaces are so vast. You can start at Winnipeg on any good-sized map and draw a line from Winnipeg through Saskatoon and on to Edmonton. They have an organization there which travelled from Winnipeg to Vancouver by road. They did it to prove it could happen. I must say the basis of their whole equipment was pull-outs and shovels, but they finally got through. I have no idea how long they travelled on the ties of the railroad but they made it in the final analysis.

I said that I would take only a moment or two. Before I sit down may I repeat my advice, if I may use that expression, to the minister. Do not let us have a commission to further confuse the picture. Let him stay in his present position. He has made up his mind that the route is going to be left to the provinces. Thereby he avoids all sorts of difficulties, but even now of course he will have to listen to the eloquence of my very good friends who come from that area which the little town of Leduc has now made known to Canadians, namely, the city of Edmonton.

**Mr. Robert Fair (Battle River):** Mr. Speaker, before the debate ends I think it is only right that a few words should be said about the practical route. The hon. member for Lethbridge (Mr. Blackmore) put up quite a case