

that the report submitted is nothing but economic tomfoolery. Certainly it does not appeal to me as sensible or reasonable, and I suggest to the Minister of Railways and Canals that the matter now before us should be considered from a standpoint other than the one of railway economics, if the report to which I have referred is the result of a railway economic survey.

What will happen to the northern part of British Columbia and all these resources I have outlined? May I add that I have touched only upon the possibilities of that section of Canada. One could travel up the Finlay river and treble the mineral area, if one desired. Further may I point out that the Finlay area is not included in this report. What will happen is simply this, that the Obed route will be of no potential value to the province of British Columbia. Not only that, but it will do very little service to the province of Alberta. That province is already served by a railway. The construction of the Obed route would do nothing for the province of Alberta, and for at least a time it would put the Peace River section of the province of British Columbia entirely off the map. That part of Canada lying north of the Peace River district will be placed in a position whereby, in order to get produce to the natural market of Vancouver, it will have to be hauled about 1,600 or 1,700 miles, instead of along the Peace River route of only 800 or 900 miles. As my hon. friend from Peace River (Mr. Kennedy) has pointed out, that distance will be very materially reduced, if the outlet is taken to Stewart.

For the consideration of the minister and the government I can think of no other project in the whole of the Dominion of Canada which will lend itself so readily and be of such lasting benefit to all the people as the construction of a western outlet from the Peace River district. As the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Mackenzie) has stated, the building of the outlet has been promised by both the political parties. There could be only one excuse for the government not proceeding with the construction of the route, and that would be the financial position of this as well as other countries. Whether or not that is sufficient reason to postpone construction, I admit it is a very substantial reason why the undertaking should be considered only after very careful observations and inquiries. I submit the construction of the Peace River outlet would be one of the most readily accessible projects in the Dominion of Canada for the relief of unemployment.

[Mr. J. A. Fraser.]

I suggest consideration of the matter to the government, and trust they will give it their very best thought. I would hope that after inquiry they may find themselves in a position to provide the sum of \$15,000,000 towards the completion of the outlet and connection with that northern country.

Mr. THOMAS REID (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I should like to add a few words to what already has been said regarding the Peace River proposal. During the last two days I have been perusing the report which was issued, and which I now have before me. I am particularly struck with the first paragraph of that report wherein the letter of the minister is quoted. In that letter the engineers were asked to approach the subject from the viewpoint of the whole dominion. In the second paragraph of the report one might conclude that the engineers were setting out with a view to finding an outlet to the Pacific coast because we find the following words:

Being a committee of railway engineers, we have concluded that our report should be based upon railway economics from the standpoint of the Dominion of Canada as a whole, leaving it to others to furnish you with information on the subject other than that from a railway standpoint. To illustrate this:—One route might work out from the best available data as to prospective tonnage, to be the most favourable from a railway annual expense standpoint, while another route less favourable from that same standpoint, might by some be considered, despite that disadvantage, to have certain other potential, intangible, or prospective possibilities . . .

And so on. One might be led to believe that in that inquiry they were setting out to find a western outlet. When we come to the last of their findings, however and compare them with the report I have in my hand known as the Peace River district report, I find the two reports are practically the same, with the exception that the clauses have been changed around.

If one reads the report on the Peace River district he will find that the statement is made that there is no hope that the line could be made self-supporting. Then they go on to speak of the Obed route, using practically the same language as that found in the findings now before me.

I wish at this time to take exception to the following statement which appears in the report before me:

Since that time a reduction of freight rates has been accorded them, now substantially equalling rates which would obtain if a western outlet were in use.