

much further east. It has now been decided that the ore should be shipped through Grimshaw. That is one of the questions that really delayed the introduction of this bill, the time required for those interested to become reconciled to the Grimshaw route. There were a number of people who were most anxious that the ore should be shipped over the more easterly route. It has been trucked in a great many cases. There are millions of acres of beautiful agricultural land along the Vermilion River, which this railway will serve. As far up as Hay River there is good agricultural land, wonderful stock country and hay-growing areas. From what little knowledge I had, I was always anxious that the railroad should take the route which it is now going to take, but there were very great pressures to the contrary. That is one factor that has delayed its building.

The honourable Leader of the Opposition mentioned cost. I am convinced that no difficulty will be experienced in crossing the Peace River. The British Columbia government experienced no difficulty in doing so and were running trains across the river in short order, right over into Fort St. John.

**Hon. Mr. Blois:** The railway does not cross the Peace River.

**Hon. Mr. Macdonald (Braniford):** It starts beyond the Peace River.

**Hon. Mr. Brunt:** No, it does not cross the Peace River.

**Hon. Mr. Horner:** Anyway, I wanted to say a few words to set the honourable senator's mind at rest. This is not going to be a waste of Canadian dollars: it will be a money earner in the years to come.

**Hon. Donald Cameron:** Honourable senators, first of all I must say that I am happy my friend and colleague, the honourable senator from Edmonton (Hon. Mr. Buchanan), has been able to achieve a lifelong ambition tonight, in seeing the initial steps being taken in the construction of the Pine Point Railway. While I feel, on the basis of the information so far supplied, that it might look as though the Senate is being asked to buy a "pig in a poke", I am hopeful that sufficient information will be forthcoming to allay the suspicions which may have been engendered. As one who feels that there is a tremendous opportunity in Canada for the development of the north country, I am happy to see that at least the initial steps are being taken to make that area of tremendous resources much more accessible.

I was particularly interested to learn that a decision had been made regarding the route of the railway. Some honourable senators will recall that two royal commissions

were appointed to discuss this very controversial point. One appointed by the Alberta Government, under James McGregor, recommended that it be away to the east. I was never too happy about that decision, because I could not see the justification for anticipating immediate traffic which would warrant that eastern location. I also knew that the agricultural area to be served, if the railway was to go north from Grimshaw, the western route, was a tremendous one. I assure honourable senators who have not visited that part of the country that there is an empire there. It is tremendous country, consisting of farm land, grazing land and forests, plus rich mineral resources. I suggest that honourable senators who do not know the area should take the earliest opportunity to see it.

The second royal commission was the Manning Commission, appointed to decide where the railway should go. With a certain possible excess of caution, the recommendations of that commission were not quite conclusive; in other words, it was left to someone else finally to decide where the railway should go. I must say that I am very happy at the decision that it should go, ultimately, north from Grimshaw and follow what is known as the western route. I think that is the right decision, certainly in terms of immediate traffic for the railway and in terms of adding impetus to the opening up of this huge area of northern Canada. Another factor which ties in with that decision is that there is the expectation that a \$15 million steel plant will be built just a few miles west of Grimshaw, at Hines Creek. That is one more piece of evidence as to the opening up and development of the resources in this northern area.

Therefore, I wish to record my feeling, both as an Albertan and as a Canadian, that at last we are beginning to recognize in a very tangible way the importance and potential of the resources in the northland. I have no fears about what we shall find and what we shall have to do. I know that a few hundred miles away in the Russian area—where conditions of climate, topography and soil are much the same as our own—are to be found dozens of large cities of two or three hundred thousand people. I hope the day will come when we shall see something of the same character in the northern part of Canada.

On the technical aspects of the bill, the requirement is that Pine Point Mines Limited and Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited pay a certain amount towards the cost. I think this is all to the good.