

Unemployment Relief

Prime Minister on different occasions during this discussion has said that none of this money would be earmarked for any purpose, but during the last election the Conservative party committed him to a trans-Canada highway and something concrete should be done. This is not the place to discuss the best possible route for a trans-Canada highway. I believe, however, it is in order for me to point out that during the election campaign the present Minister of Immigration maintained that a trans-Canada highway would be constructed through the northern section of northern Ontario and I am absolutely in accord with him in this matter. In this connection I wish to quote from the Canadian Motorist for July, 1930. It says:

Hon. William Finlayson, Minister of Lands and Forests for Ontario, while in Sault Ste. Marie recently, said that he was confident work on the Lake Superior highway would be prosecuted before long. This, however, depended to a large extent on the attitude of the Dominion government, he added, which had not yet accepted the proposal of the province that the work be undertaken on a 50-50 cost basis, as an unemployment measure.

"The trans-Canada highway, of which the Lake Superior stretch is referred to as part, is a huge undertaking, and may cost Ontario \$50,000,000," the minister said. "And the province is prepared to go ahead with a reasonable amount of support from Ottawa. In the United States the government takes care of roads like the Lincoln highway and goes 50-50 on all state and interstate roads. We regard the trans-Canada highway as a similar undertaking and we are very anxious to start the work at once in view of the tremendous amount of unemployment in the country at the present time."

Was the Minister of Lands and Forests speaking in his official capacity for the government of Ontario, and also for the Conservative party federally? Because during the same month the hon. Minister of Immigration and Colonization (Mr. Gordon), my opponent, and most of the other Conservative candidates in that section of the country were saying that a trans-Canada highway should be constructed alongside the Canadian National railways by way of Haileybury, Cochrane, Kapuskasing and Hearst up to Sioux Lookout. In this connection I hope the Prime Minister will find it possible to give an answer to my question.

There were also several advertisements about the same matter, and referring again to the various plans of the Conservative party during the last election, this is what they had to say of pledge No. 4:

A policy that will build a national highway across Canada, instead of forcing motorists to use American roads to get past the great lakes, with the result that they now leave in the United States the money which they spend by

[Mr. Bradette.]

the way instead of spending it for supplies in Canada, as they would do if Canada had a through road.

This is an absolute and definite promise made by the party in power to-day, and I hope under the circumstances it will be possible for the government to earmark a certain amount of this \$20,000,000 for starting the construction of a trans-Canada highway. The distance to be constructed is longer than the Prime Minister stated a few days ago. From North Bay to the Manitoba boundary is approximately 700 miles; the road from North Bay to Cochrane, 425 miles, is already constructed; but from Hearst to the Manitoba border there is still 550 miles to be constructed. Taking the figures given by hon. Mr. Finlayson, the construction of the trans-Canada highway along the north shore of Superior will cost \$50,000 per mile. A question of that nature, as the Prime Minister truly said the other day, although originally the concern of Ontario, becomes national when considered as a means to bridge the gap between east and west. In our section of the country the construction of such a road, instead of costing \$50,000 per mile, will cost only \$5,000 per mile, and I hope the government will deal with this problem in a logical and practical way, giving at the same time attention to the regional and economic aspects of the situation.

In the handling of the fund for that purpose, I want to say a few words with respect to the activities of the provincial government during the recent campaign. I am not going to revive the old battles in any spirit of bitterness. When we came up to northern Ontario, over a quarter of a century ago, we were not asked to go there as Liberals or Conservatives, as Labour men or Progressives; we were asked to go there as pioneers and Canadians. I am sorry to say that in the section of the country I have the honour to represent the provincial authorities treat some of the people as though they were slaves. I have seen this treatment in the case of my own family and friends among the labouring class: they have been told that simply because they happened to be Labour men or Liberals they would not be given any work on government undertakings. The Prime Minister has said that there will be no politics played in the distribution of this money. I hope this will be so. Certainly the spectacle during the last federal election of provincial ministers using provincial funds for purely electioneering purposes was far from edifying, and I hope there will never be a repetition of such reprehensible practices. We are a free people and I am determined to expose such scandals whenever they come to my