

8. In order to provide direct access to factories, warehouses, and other industrial establishments in various parts of Canada, 223 industrial spur tracks totalling 43.7 miles in length were constructed during the year. The longest of these spur lines, 5.8 miles in length, was constructed from Forestburg, Alberta, to the Forestburg Collieries, where strip mining operations have begun. Another spur line of 4.8 miles was completed from the former National Transcontinental line near Barraute, Quebec, to the properties of the Barvue Mines Limited, where major deposits of zinc ore have been located.

New Branch Lines

9. The strategic position of Canadian National lines in relation to the economic frontier has been demonstrated by significant developments in northern Manitoba and northwestern British Columbia.

10. During the year a request was made for the extension of the Canadian National branch line terminating at Sherridon, Manitoba, to the site of extensive nickel, copper and cobalt deposits at Lynn Lake, approximately 150 miles north of Sherridon. After a study of the economic factors involved, recommendations were made and the necessary authorization obtained in the late summer to proceed with construction. By the end of the year the line had been surveyed for a distance of 54 miles as far as the crossing of the Churchill River, approximately 21% of the surveyed right-of-way was cleared, and 7 miles of roadbed were graded. Under an agreement with the Sherritt-Gordon Mines Limited, the objective is to have the line ready for service by October, 1953.

11. Large scale developments centering around the construction of an aluminum reduction plant in the vicinity of Kitimat, British Columbia, approximately 70 miles southeast of Prince Rupert, have given rise to a proposal for construction of a branch line approximately 46 miles in length to connect with the Prince Rupert line of the Canadian National. After careful investigation of the financial considerations involved, this project has been recommended by the Management and is now awaiting final authorization.

Other transportation developments

12. The construction by the Federal Government and the Government of Nova Scotia of a causeway across the Strait of Canso is scheduled to begin in 1952. This will provide a continuous rail link in place of the train ferries now in operation.

13. A further significant improvement in facilities for handling traffic to and from Newfoundland is anticipated from the construction, to be undertaken by the Federal Government, of a modern icebreaking ferry for service between North Sydney, Nova Scotia, and Port aux Basques, Newfoundland. The new ferry will be of special design, and will employ a type of portable freight container, adaptable for use on Newfoundland railway equipment, which will not only speed up freight handling but reduce loss and damage resulting from transshipment between boat and rail.

14. Another notable development in the field of transportation is the northward extension of the Pacific Great Eastern from Quesnel to Prince George, British Columbia, where it will link with the Canadian National line to Prince Rupert.

The St. Lawrence Seaway Project

15. The prospect that Canada will, if necessary, proceed without participation of the United States in the St. Lawrence Seaway Project is of immense significance to the Canadian economy.