

*The Address—Mr. Nielsen*

space it appears obvious that those countries possessing the greatest mineral resources together with the scientific ability to utilize them will lead the way.

Because of the vital importance of the metals industry to the preservation of our democratic way of life, we have not only a national but an international obligation to foster the healthy growth of our mining industry in every possible fashion. As the world demand for metals increases our northern frontiers must be pushed further and further back by those venturesome people associated with the mining industry. The individual prospector must be encouraged and assisted in every way. Northern Canada and particularly those areas such as the Yukon with already proven mineral resources should indeed have a bright future ahead. But mineral wealth is a hidden wealth and vast amounts of time and money are required to bring new mines into existence. The risks are great and the disappointments many. If this industry is to flourish—and the future of Canada demands that it must flourish—there should be a minimum number of restrictions and the maximum amount of encouragement—encouragement which has been wanting for so long, particularly in the more northerly areas of Canada.

It is important that confidence be restored among those whose tasks it is to discover and develop Canada's mineral resources. Adequate and immediate measures should be taken to develop these northern resources, for it is of vital importance to the future of our country.

The resources of the Yukon stand second to none—gold, iron, asbestos, copper, silver, nickel, and all the other base and precious metals are there, as well as potentially vast oceans of oil. We have the necessary power potential to process these minerals. As a matter of fact the latent potential of the Yukon river and lake system is twice that of the St. Lawrence seaway project.

These are the main reasons for the people of the Yukon being there at all—they are there because they have a faith, born of knowledge, of the potential of the Yukon. Until recently this faith has been shared only by those who sought their futures in the Canadian north, people who are in the fullest sense pioneers. But these people now see the fulfilment of their hopes—the hopes of all Canadians—in the dynamic plans for resource development which lie at the very core of the policy of this government.

It has taken a long time, perhaps too long, for the attention of Canadians to be drawn to their northland, its wealth and its people

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and, I might add, its location. It rather surprised me to learn of the number of people who believe that the Yukon is either a part of Alaska or of the Northwest Territories, or who are still wondering whether or not British Columbia has taken over part of the Yukon. I wonder how many realize, calculating ore reserves, that the largest silver mine in the world is in the Yukon; I wonder how many realize that our temperature compares with that of Alberta and Saskatchewan; that the Alaska highway—giving access to the Yukon from Alberta and British Columbia and maintained by the Canadian army at such a high standard—is the best gravel highway of its kind to be found anywhere on this continent.

I do not think that any member of this house entertains any doubt about the future of the Yukon or the certainty of her riches or the quality of her people, but wealth and willing hands alone are not enough without the means of transportation. I have spoken of the Alaska highway and we also have the beginning of a road system within the Yukon and a railway from Whitehorse to tidewater at Skagway in Alaska. Between us and the heritage of the people of Canada in the mineral and oil resources of the north, however, lie miles upon miles of bush, rock and uncrossed rivers. These gaps must be bridged and here lies the essence of this government's policy. We must build the roads, the railways, the communications to make accessible these northern areas of hidden wealth. We must build the power projects and unite them with the mineral wealth to ensure the industrialization of Canada's north. I need not remind you, sir, of the part that transportation has played in uniting this nation from east to west, politically and economically, but today there is a new and exciting concept which can be grasped by those who have confidence in Canada's future.

Canada's first national development policy was given to her by our first great, and Conservative, prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. In that day the building of a railway and other communications was a matter of vision, of faith, and confidence in the future. There were men of little vision then; men who said that a railway to the west coast would add nothing to the economy of this nation; men who said that the vast open spaces of the prairies were destined to remain empty; men who said that the Pacific could never be safeguarded for North America.

But Sir John A. Macdonald and his government were not prepared to wait for the oil wells of the west to flow, those same oil fields which only last year contributed