

Trans-Canada Highway

been spent in the United States. These are the amounts that would have been paid to that province in the different years:

Year	Amount
1939	\$1,351,920
1940	869,000
1941	1,098,480
1942	2,095,200
1943	1,488,960
1944	179,960
1945
1946	2,979,130
1947	3,000,300
1948	2,969,460
1949	3,048,500
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	\$19,080,910

All that money was not given to the province of Alberta. That is the way it has worked out for us. The hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) pointed out what has been spent in Montana and other states along the border. I ask hon. members to compare those expenditures with what has not been spent in Canada. We shall then have an answer for the first two-for-a-nickel politician who comes out from Ottawa to Alberta and sneers about the poor roads in that province and compares them with the fine roads across the line. We shall then have an answer for the shyster newspapers all over the country who do the same kind of thing without having taken the trouble to tell the people of Alberta or Saskatchewan that whereas the United States government is constantly helping the states down there, the Canadian government is doing next to nothing at all to help the provinces up here.

Mr. Byrne: Can the hon. member tell us what the Alberta government collects in the way of licence fees for cars and what is collected by the state of Montana? I do not want the aggregate revenue; I simply want the charge per car.

Mr. Blackmore: If the hon. member asked a minister of the federal government who had all his experts in front of him a question like that it would take the minister some little time to find the answer. The hon. member would hardly expect the minister to be able to give the answer offhand. The Alberta government is using practically all the money raised from motor vehicle fees and all that sort of thing in paying for the debts accumulated for roads by the provincial governments which preceded it. The money was borrowed and spent on roads and the roads have been lost. The Social Credit government were forced to build roads and then at the same time to take care of the debt that had been accumulated. If I had known, I would have come down here fully prepared to answer the hon. gentleman, but

[Mr. Blackmore.]

I may bring down all this information at a later time and be able to tell him anything he wants to know.

I do not wish to spend any more time on this matter as I shall probably have more to say later on. To summarize: first of all the dominion government must enter the field of highway construction on a far wider scale than it has ever dreamed of doing. I think the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. Higgins) put his finger right on the pulse of the situation when he said that if we did not build these roads in Canada somebody else would. If it is not the United States it is likely to be the Russians. We can take our choice. I think that is putting it pretty clearly. We just cannot escape the responsibility which rests upon us. Federally we must enter the field in a far more generous manner than we have ever done in the history of this country, than we have ever dreamed of doing.

I am grateful for what the minister is now proposing and I thank him for it in the interests of all the people of Canada, but this is only a small thing compared with what he ought to be contemplating. This may all sound pretty harsh but I am simply stating the facts. I put the figures on record so that we may know that what Canada has done looks extremely meagre and almost contemptible. As I say, the participation must be on a far greater scale.

Second, we must stop trying to decide what particular highway we are going to build and concentrate on the building of a system of highways, not only to go across Canada and be known as trans-Canada highways but to connect up the urban centres in the country, especially those which are situated in what we might term strategic positions. Speaking as a westerner I submit that all over western Canada there should be a system of highways which could be used in case we are called upon in an emergency to defend ourselves.

We do not need to bother about how the money is going to be spent. I believe the four western provinces have shown themselves sufficiently capable of handling money that comes into their hands to justify our placing implicit trust in them. All we need to do is to supply the money; they will build the highways. When they get done we shall have the system of highways that we have all longed for in Canada.

Mr. A. L. Smith (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, I undertake to finish before eleven o'clock. I think I know what you have in your mind. I only rise to speak so that I may suggest to the minister who has charge