

# \$25,000,000 Federal Aid for Highways? So Says Unofficial Report from Ottawa

**A**LTHOUGH official confirmation is lacking, a report has reached *The Canadian Engineer* from a creditable source of information that the Dominion government has decided to appropriate \$25,000,000 for Federal aid for highways, and that a bill has been prepared which will be introduced in the House soon after the opening of the next session of Parliament.

A number of provincial ministers and deputy ministers of roads are known to have been in Ottawa during the past month with the object of discussing the provisions of the bill with A. W. Campbell, who was appointed not long ago as special commissioner to report to the Dominion government regarding the advisability of Federal aid for highways.

## Apportioned According to Population

It is stated that the above mentioned amount will be divided among the provinces pro rata according to population, just the same as was the appropriation for housing.

The provinces, it is said, will be required to spend \$1.50 for every dollar of Federal aid. In other words, the Federal government will pay for 40% of the construction of the roads in respect of which aid is given, the other 60% to be paid for by the provincial governments and municipalities in accordance with any plan which the various provincial governments may individually adopt.

The Dominion government's money is to be spent only on main trunk highways (highways connecting cities and carrying interprovincial traffic), or on main market roads (leading roads radiating from towns through well-populated farming districts).

The approval of the Dominion government's representative will be obtained by the provinces when naming roads to be constructed under the Federal aid plan. It is understood that A. W. Campbell, formerly deputy minister of the Department of Railways and Canals, who recently resigned that position in order to prepare the special report on highways, will most likely be appointed Commissioner of Highways to administer the government fund.

It is rumored that Mr. Campbell will likely be given rank equivalent to that of deputy minister, and that he will work under the direction of the minister of the Department of Railways and Canals, so as to keep the whole subject of

transportation of all kinds within the one department. It was expected that an announcement to this effect would be made this week by Hon. J. D. Reid, Minister of Railways and Canals, but up to the time of going to press, *The Canadian Engineer* received no notice of such an announcement.

When interviewed Tuesday afternoon by *The Canadian Engineer*, Mr. Campbell refused to discuss the matter and would not say whether the above statements are correct. He merely stated that his report to the government is not yet complete, and that he does not know just when it will be finished, and that he had not heard of the government's having voted any money as yet toward Federal aid for highways.

Other officials who are thought to be in the government's confidence, however, admitted to *The Canadian Engineer* that to the best of their knowledge, the proposed bill would be along the above-mentioned lines, and intimated that an official announcement could be expected at an early date.

## Provincial Governments Are Satisfied

It is rumored that some of the provinces objected last month to various details of the proposed bill; British Columbia, for instance, believing that the distribution of the money should not be made pro rata according to population, and other provinces wanting the Federal government to pay more than 40% of the expense of inter-provincial roads. It is understood that practically all of these outstanding differences have been settled, however, to the mutual satisfaction of the various provincial governments. Quebec and Ontario are said to have given hearty approval to the distribution of the fund by population, and the statement has been made that Ontario expressed willingness to spend two dollars for every dollar that the Federal government spends.

Hon. Finlay Macdiarmid, Minister of Public Works and Highways in the Ontario government, and Hon. J. D. Reid, are among the speakers at the meeting of the Eastern Ontario Good Roads Association this week at Ottawa, and it is possible that in the course of their addresses at this meeting, some reference may be made to the above-mentioned scheme, although it is thought that the whole project is not yet in shape for any very detailed announcement.

D. H. McDougall, president of the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Co., Ltd., announces that the Wabana Mines will be developed to such an extent that the company will be able to produce ore far in excess of its former outputs and at materially reduced cost.

At a recent meeting of the Montreal Branch of the Association of Canadian Building and Construction Industries, W. H. Irving was elected president of the branch; J. K. McNutt, vice-president; J. E. Walsh, hon.-treasurer; R. F. Dykes, secretary. The supply section elected A. W. Brenner, A. F. Daly, and John Grieve as their representatives on the executive; the general contractors elected Donald Church, E. B. Evans and John Quinlan. The trade contractors have not yet elected their representatives.

Arthur H. Blanchard, consulting highway engineer of New York City, will preside at the sixteenth annual convention of the American Road Builders' Association, which will be held February 25th and 26th at New York City. E. L. Powers, of New York, is secretary and James H. MacDonald, of New Haven, Conn., is treasurer. The board of directors includes Capt. J. Duchastel, city engineer of Outremont, P.Q., and B. Michaud, Deputy Minister, Department of Roads, Province of Quebec. W. A. McLean, Deputy Minister of Highways, Province of Ontario, is a past-president and ex-officio member of the Board of Directors.

The second and third days of the annual meeting of the Commission of Conservation of Canada, which will be held February 17th to 19th at Ottawa, will be devoted to discussion of wild life protection.

In an address before the Calgary Branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada, Dr. T. H. Blow, member of the Provincial Legislature, suggested the establishment of a university for Southern Alberta. A committee was appointed to prepare a resolution to be presented to the Alberta Division of the Institute. The doctor referred to the great importance of scientific education, both for agricultural and technical pursuits, and urged the immediate construction of a school of technology for Southern Alberta.

The total 1918 output of pig iron from Canadian blast furnaces, and also from scrap metal melted in electric furnaces, is estimated by the Division of Mineral Resources and Statistics, Mines Branch, at 1,182,000 tons, of which 29,000 tons was electric furnace pig iron. The total production of steel ingots and castings is estimated at 1,910,000 tons, which includes 125,000 tons of steel made in electric furnace plants and 1,785,000 made in open-hearth and other steel furnaces. The total production of steel ingots and castings in 1917 was 1,745,734 tons. The production of electric furnace pig iron in 1917 was 13,691 tons and that of steel in electric furnaces in the same year was 50,467 tons.