

about the road from Prince Rupert to Tete Jaune? Is that a hopeless and useless piece of road? These are the main roads, Mr. Speaker, which have been laid out in the government's program for unemployment relief in the province of British Columbia, and when my hon. friend from Vancouver Centre states that these are hopeless and useless roads I take very strong exception to his statement. They are all highly necessary roads and the construction work is proceeding in a very fair and reasonable manner on each and every one of these projects.

With regard to the situation in the Peace River country, the report which we have before us practically confirms the report of 1925. It goes back and says that the Obed route is the most preferable or the best western outlet from the Peace River country. I cannot understand, Mr. Speaker, how engineers who take into consideration the situation there is in that country can come to any such conclusion. I am not a railroad engineer and do not pretend to criticize the report from that standpoint, but from the standpoint of British Columbia I do say that there is no justification in the world for the Obed route, and if the Obed route should be constructed it will hold back the development of the Peace River portion of British Columbia for generations and put Peace River off the map entirely. It will be generations before it will be possible to get a railway to serve that area.

Some reference was made here this afternoon to a report which was made for the British Columbia government in conjunction with the Canadian government and the railways and tabled a few days ago in the provincial assembly.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): In conjunction with the two railways, but not the Dominion government.

Mr. FRASER (Cariboo): In conjunction with the two railways and the province. I have not had an opportunity to read that report which was tabled only a few days ago, but I have seen a review of it in one of the local papers in British Columbia, from which for the information of hon. gentlemen I should like to quote. While this report which has just been tabled makes reference to lands which are entirely within the province of British Columbia, they are not all in what we call the Peace River area, but if the Peace River route is followed they would all be tributary to a railway connecting up Peace River with Vancouver. I am going to quote from the review which appeared in the Kamloops Sentinel of a few days ago. This is

what it says in reviewing the report which was made for the British Columbia government in regard to the Pacific Great Eastern lands in British Columbia, part of which are in the Peace River block

The general public had almost forgotten that the railways and provincial government had carried out a survey of the resources of Pacific Great Eastern Railway lands during 1929-1930. This has proved to have been most exhaustive. Under the supervision of Major J. R. Crysedale, the investigation is described as one of the most comprehensive ever undertaken in the dominion, which means much.

In a nutshell the resources are listed thus: Coal—good quality, easily mined to the extent of 600,000,000 tons.

That is in the Peace River area. It goes on:

Timber—more than 18,000,000,000 board feet, with nearly all of it classed as accessible.

Petroleum and natural gas—620 square miles of favourable structure areas.

A total area of nearly 20,000,000 acres of which only 893,000 have been alienated, 2,230,000 are cultivable, 11,000,000 suitable for grazing lands and 6,000,000 unproductive.

Water-power—over 150,000 horse-power in Peace River block and a minimum of 50,000 horse-power in the three southern blocks.

Geologists report 3,630 square miles with lode mineral possibilities and 9,400 square miles of favourable area for placer gold. Other non-metallic minerals are reported "potentially important."

This report will reconcile British Columbians somewhat to this historic railway which has been described as a line which starts nowhere and arrives nowhere. Posterity may see in it a project that had one salient fault, it was built long before its time. But that the general route had merit will be conceded, in the light of the resources that are now revealed. It is to be hoped that the survey will have an important bearing in the event of a sale, a consummation devoutly to be wished during these times.

That, Mr. Speaker, gives an idea of the resources tributary to the proposed western outlet of the Peace River country. All the resources I have outlined are tributary to and can be made accessible to that line. The development of these natural resources would surely to some extent lend itself to giving employment to quite a number of people in the province of British Columbia. I fail to understand why, having all these facts before them, the engineers came to the conclusion that the Obed route is the proper western outlet for the Peace River country. I am very loath to accept it.

A statement was made in the first part of the report that the report is based on railway economics. From a review of the situation and from my personal knowledge of the country, may I say that if railway economics are reflected in that report, I am not very favourably impressed with them. I would say