

Trans-Canada Highway Act

I have requested both privately and publicly that the minister visit the lakehead. Conservative fortunes are not very high there and he could do something about raising them. It seems to be an area that does not take to Conservatives to any marked or consistent degree. The people there do not even take to the vision. I am always willing to give Conservative politicians every opportunity to come there and rectify the situation, so my invitation to the minister is sincere. Come up there and take a look at this trans-Canada highway. Take a look at the botch you have managed to make of the lakehead terminal so far. Bring the Prime Minister along and take him for a drive. I have noticed that he likes driving through Quebec. He took a big tour through Quebec last year because he thought the situation was shaky but I can assure him that he will be shaking when he is through driving over the trans-Canada highway in that part of Ontario. I would very much like to see such a visit. When the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works travel that part of the trans-Canada highway they will be very warm when they are through. In other words, I am suggesting that we have a built-in warm reception in the form of the trans-Canada highway.

I do not want to overdo this point but I should like to reiterate: Let us not have any talk about a second trans-Canada highway as an if or a promise or a vision until we have the substance in northwestern Ontario of the first trans-Canada highway. I suggest that the minister has got to do more than talking to the provincial authorities to get them on the move. I know that the provincial authorities have been threatening to come here and do some tough talking about more money. In this particular case the money is there, according to the minister and previous ministers, but they have not been taking it. I think that some time during this debate or the later discussion we should have from the minister a really candid explanation of why the Ontario government has been puttering around for so long with respect to the trans-Canada highway in our part of the country.

(Translation):

Mr. Dorion: Mr. Chairman, I read with interest the speech made yesterday in this house by the hon. member for Levis (Mr. Bourget), with regard to the resolution sponsored by the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Walker).

The tone and the character of his remarks show that the hon. member is obsessed by the imminence of provincial elections in

[Mr. Fisher.]

Quebec. His federal mandate is apparently not enough for him and so he did not fail to sermonize people who, after all have been given a mandate different from his own and which entrusts them, and them alone, with the responsibility for managing the affairs of the province. Does it mean that his provincial leader is so weak that he needs an alter ego in Ottawa to help him strengthen his positions?

Be that as it may, I do not intend to follow suit. In spite of my regard for the Quebec government, I have always endeavoured to rely on my own convictions in setting the course I should follow in this house. This I have chosen and still choose to do, out of regard for the mandate entrusted to me by the people of Bellechasse, a mandate which prompts me to adopt a federal and constitutional approach in dealing with the problems we have to consider.

That might well come as a surprise to my good friend of Levis. Indeed, according to the remarks he made yesterday, he seems to think that a man cannot reason on his own, assume his own responsibilities, but has to borrow ideas elsewhere and take his orders from outside.

If that is the hon. member's conception of a political party, and because of the regard I have for him, I refuse to believe that it is—

(Text):

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I have been listening to the hon. member and I should like to remind him that we are discussing a resolution to amend the Trans-Canada Highway Act. I was hoping that he was perhaps making a point leading up to that, and I am sure he will now come back to the resolution before the committee.

(Translation):

Mr. Dorion: Mr. Chairman, I was merely referring to certain remarks made yesterday, but at your kind direction, I will at once revert to the matter under review.

The views I shall express today on the problem we are considering—and this is the first opportunity I have of doing so—are quite personal views that in no way engage the responsibility of either my colleagues or of the government which has been entrusted with administering Quebec's affairs and whose views, attitudes and inspirations I respect.

The sole object of the legislation before us is, after all, to increase to \$400 million the contributions required to complete the trans-Canada highway and to extend to December 31, 1963, the period required for its completion. The resolution says no more and no less. It does not at all raise the