

*Trans-Canada Highway*

accepted generally by all—is the development of trade and industry, and particularly that industry known as the tourist traffic. The other important phase is the necessity for a good system of highways for purposes of defence.

That feature has probably been stressed in the house before, and perhaps there is no need of my mentioning it again. We all recall however the famous autobahn of Germany and the purpose of it. We know of its value to that country during the last world war. I do not suggest that we should have an autobahn, but I do feel that throughout Canada we should have highroads which if necessary can be used for defence purposes.

Another important reason, one to which the minister referred in his opening remarks, I believe, is the value of road-building in taking care of unemployment. In my opinion that is one of the important features in the program. Perhaps it is not of such importance to the other provinces as it is to Newfoundland, because unemployment is a problem we are now facing. I believe road-building has been termed a shelf project; whatever it is, it would be of immense value to us in this connection.

As has been stated so often, in Newfoundland we have immense tourist possibilities but no roads. With an area of 42,000 square miles we have less roads both in number and in quality than has Prince Edward Island with an area of only 2,000 square miles—and that is only on the island alone irrespective of Labrador. One can easily see why your poorest cousin needs and looks forward to a system of roads. The value of the tourist industry cannot be stressed too greatly, because with the opening up of highroads and the resultant opening of the country, not only will citizens from the wealthier sections of Canada come to us as often as possible, but also we will have a tremendous influx of American visitors as well. From that point of view I feel that no matter who pays for these roads, whether it is the wealthy provinces, the poorer provinces or perhaps even the Americans, it is a good investment, so long as we do not have to pay for them or pay more than we are able.

I am sure this matter has been considered before, but some years ago I noticed that on some of the American highroads specially wide and long strips were being built in places, the purpose being to take care of emergency plane landings. It might be well to keep in mind that in the proposed highroad provision could be made at no great extra cost for an extra twenty feet in width and a long straight-away of a mile or so which would serve as a first-class emergency

landing field, at which planes could land and from which they could take off. It might be even an attraction to tourists. This is offered only as a suggestion as we go along.

I do not need to repeat the strategic value of the island to the rest of the continent. But with the bases in Newfoundland it seems ridiculous to find that there is no road connection between them. We have a big American base at St. John's, with an airport at Torbay, which was used to a great extent during the war as a base for the spotting of submarines by aircraft. Then, we have the naval base at Argentia. St. John's and Argentia are connected; but may I remind the house that they are connected chiefly by American money being spent in their construction. Americans built and maintained that military road to give them speedy transportation between St. John's and their naval base at Argentia.

From there on however there is a great hiatus. The great airport at Gander is an important part in the scheme of defence of Canada; but there is no road connection with Gander and the rest of the country. Going farther west we come to Ernest Harmon air base at Stephenville. This is an American air base. There is no road connection with it and the other bases. So, apart altogether from the advantage of roads in the ordinary scheme of things, it seems to me apparent that in the defence scheme of the dominion and the United States all these bases should be connected by roads.

I do not think there is any contradiction to this. I do not believe it would be taken in good grace in this parliament or by the people of Canada, but I am quite certain the United States will build these roads if we do not. As a nation, surely we do not consider we are in the position where the United States should come in and build our roads. But that is what will happen unless these United States bases are connected up properly in the not too distant future. Somebody is going to do the job and I think that somebody should be Canada. This should all be part of the trans-Canada system.

The difficulty faced by the other provinces in deciding where the road is to run does not exist with us. We know perfectly well where it is going to run because we have no alternative. It will run from St. John's to Port aux Basques. Apparently this route has received the blessings of the powers that be.

But there is one thing I want to be certain about. When the highway is completed to Port aux Basques I want the minister to implement the undertaking contained in section 32 of the terms of union that a proper car ferry will be provided. This may be