

*Trans-Canada Highway*

present leader of the opposition (Mr. MacKenzie King). He said:

If, after federal needs are supplied, if after we have reduced some of the public debt and have reduced some of the taxation of the people of this country, we have money left that we do not know what to do with, with respect to any of our federal obligations, there will be time then to go into one or other of these numerous projects which hon. gentlemen opposite wish us to indulge in.

He closed his remarks by saying:

We will do well, I believe, in the interest of provinces and federal government alike, each to have regard to our respective jurisdictions, and not to venture too frequently beyond them in making contributions from one treasury to another in a manner never contemplated by the constitution of our land.

The right hon. gentleman gave various reasons, but I believe the quotation I have given contains the gist of his argument. The other day in the house, on another matter, he took a similar attitude, to the effect that it was not the duty of the Dominion of Canada to contribute in a general way to the various provincial projects that might come up at various times. In fact on one occasion he said that giving money to the provinces for certain reasons was a vicious principle, because, as he pointed out, the federal authorities did not have control of the expenditure of that money. I think I am quoting my right hon. friend correctly in that regard.

The hon. member who spoke first this afternoon was more emphatic during the election in the north country. I have before me a paper called *The Northern Tribune*, published in Kapuskasing, Ontario, and according to this paper—which I am informed is Liberal—he is stated to have called this whole resolution “clap-trap.” I shall read one sentence from the editorial page of this paper of July 18, 1930.

In his public speech at Kapuskasing yesterday afternoon Mr. Joseph Bradette, retiring member for North Timiskaming and Liberal candidate for reelection, issued a sweeping challenge to anyone to prove that he had voted against the trans-Canada highway in parliament; and he twice referred to the House of Commons resolution involving that highway as a “clap-trap political resolution.”

Mr. BRADETTE: Hear, hear.

Mr. MANION: The hon. member may have his own way. I have read the resolution, however, just as it was printed in *Hansard*, and it must be obvious to all hon. members that the intention of the resolution was to assist in the building of a trans-Canada highway.

Mr. BRADETTE: It had nothing to do with it at all.

[Mr. Manion.]

Mr. MANION: I do not wish to enter into a political argument of any serious nature with my hon. friend from Kenora-Rainy River. However my hon. friend was in the same unfortunate position so far as this resolution was concerned, because he voted with the hon. member for North Timiskaming against Mr. Kellner's resolution in 1930. I have not looked into the records to see whether he voted that way in 1929, but I imagine if he was in the house he would have voted the same way. However the hon. member was a member of the then government for at least four years, and apparently he did not find it desirable nor did he see the absolute need for the building of a trans-Canada highway. For that reason I suggest he is not in a position at the present time to twit us so early in our regime with breaking pledges. I suggest that the hon. member for—

Mr. HEENAN: I did not accuse my hon. friends of breaking pledges; I asked him to fulfil them.

Mr. MANION: Probably my hon. friend did not accuse us to-day, but on former occasions he has accused the present government of breaking pledges. Whether he did it to-day or yesterday matters not; he has done so on a number of occasions. I must say to my hon. friend that it would appear he is much more enthusiastic now about the building of a highway than he was when he was a member of the government which had the power to put such legislation into effect. I would add further that my hon. friend was a representative of northern Ontario at that time. At the present time not only is he more active in promoting the trans-Canada highway than he was when in power, but he is more active in connection with the eight hour day than he was when in power. He is much more active concerning unemployment insurance than he was when in power. I might add that the bill he has introduced this session concerning the vote of the people in the district of Patricia was introduced last year. He withdrew the bill at that time however when he could have pushed it through had the other members of the then government been standing behind him. So that it would appear that the hon. member is much more enthusiastic now about many of these questions than he was when he was in a position to put his enthusiasm into effect. I make these statements in no unkind way, because I suppose as members of an opposition we are a little less responsible than when in power. Perhaps we are much more—