

The Northern Alberta Railway, runs from Edmonton to Dawson Creek, at which point it ends in a blind alley. This section of the road is now managed jointly by the two great railway companies in Canada, the Canadian National railway and the Canadian Pacific railway.

My information is that the joint management has not proven very satisfactory. The rolling stock seems to have got into bad repair, while the roadbed itself has been rather badly neglected. It would appear that each of the companies is endeavouring to skim off as much cream as possible, without feeding the cow any hay or chop.

The Pacific Great Eastern section of this line is managed by the government of British Columbia. As hon. members may know, it begins at the town of Squamish, thence running north or north easterly to the town of Quesnel, there meeting with its blind alley. As hon. members will recognize, this road begins at a considerable distance from the main port on the Pacific coast, and ends long before it taps the resources of the north-eastern and central territories, toward which its eastern end hopefully points. My suggestion is that the government consider taking over the Pacific Great Eastern and building a line through from Squamish to Vancouver to join with the Canadian National railway, and that at Quesnel they extend it north to Prince George and then east to connect with the Northern Alberta railway. That would involve the building of about 350 miles of new road.

I believe there has been some talk of inviting private corporations to take over the Pacific Great Eastern and build the road through to the Peace river. I think I am safe in saying that this idea is generally opposed by the people. As late as the early part of last March I had the privilege of meeting the board of trade of the town of Lillooet, and that body passed a resolution to the effect that they would rather have the Pacific Great Eastern remain in the hands of the provincial government and be operated as it is now being operated than have it turned over to a private corporation.

There is a fear among the people of private corporations building railroads because they usually ask for large concessions of the public domain, in the form of either land grants or timber or minerals or power or some other natural resources. The feeling seems to be that the resources which can stimulate a private corporation to build a road, which resources belong to the people themselves, might very well be used by the people to build their own railroad so that they may

own it and also control the resources which it will tap. For that reason we believe that the Canadian National Railways should build this line. We feel that the logical and efficient thing to do is to take over both these branch lines and incorporate them in the Canadian National system and then build the line necessary to join the two.

I intend to spend the next few minutes in dealing with the extent of the territory to be served by the proposed line and to indicate something of the natural wealth which might be tapped or exploited thereby. Last year during the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne I spent some time in dealing with the resources of the Cariboo and Peace River districts. The building of such a railroad as I am suggesting would be of great benefit, not only to British Columbia but to the nation as a whole. Such an undertaking has far more than local importance; it is indeed of national importance.

In particular, however, this line would serve a vast and rich territory which is now very poorly served with transportation or which has no rail transportation at all. The territories which would be directly affected by the building of a Peace River outlet would be, first, the whole territory known as the riding of the Cariboo. This area is roughly about the size of the United Kingdom. It has, as I shall show subsequently, a great variety of valuable resources.

The next territory which would be directly served is the constituency of Peace River which is represented, as hon. members know, by the leader of the Social Credit party (Mr. Low). He is unavoidably absent to-day from the house, but I believe he intended to support this resolution. That territory also is nearly as large as the United Kingdom.

Then there is a third territory which should not be overlooked when the building of a Peace River outlet is being considered. I refer to the Northwest Territories from the boundaries of British Columbia to the boundaries of Alaska. Such a railroad as I am suggesting would be a gateway to that great territory to the north. I believe hon. members are fairly well aware of the abundant natural resources within these territories.

On many occasions this resolution, or one similar to it, has been discussed in this parliament. Seldom has it been discussed without the mover having a good deal to say about the extent of the natural wealth of the country concerned. I imagine than hon. members who have not been there have a good idea of how extensive the natural wealth is.

I should like to summarize some of the things I presented to the house at the last