

*Trans-Canada Highway Act*

Is it not correct that the only reason why Quebec has not received any money under the trans-Canada highway 50 per cent formula is that the government of Quebec would not, up until recently, make an agreement with the federal government to accept any contribution?

**Mr. Bourget:** That is absolutely right.

**Mr. Jones:** Mr. Chairman, a few weeks after I was first elected to the House of Commons I was asked to represent the then minister of public works, now the Secretary of State for External Affairs, at the official opening of the Saskatchewan section of the trans-Canada highway, the first section opened in the country. I was very glad to have that honour and privilege, and I am glad to say that since that time I have received many representations advocating the establishment of a second trans-Canada highway from Winnipeg through Saskatoon, Lloydminster, Edmonton and on to the Yellowhead pass. I think it would be of much benefit to the northern areas of our western provinces, and particularly of benefit to the area around Saskatoon.

For many years, of course, there have been persons who have been advocating this project. They have been diligent and untiring in their efforts to achieve acceptance of the proposal for a second trans-Canada highway. Since 1957 I think it is fair to say that activity in this field has increased. Members of parliament all along the route have drawn it to the attention of the government individually and in this house. Saskatoon itself has always been vitally interested in this project.

Shortly after my election I received the first of many representations on this matter sent by the trans-Canada highway system association, Yellowhead group, dated September, 1957. That was followed by representations from the Saskatchewan highway No. 14 association, the Evergreen-Yellowhead route group. Then the board of trade of the city of Saskatoon wrote again in February of this year, both to myself and to the Minister of Public Works, advocating this project. I have also received correspondence from the city of Saskatoon itself as late as February 5 of this year advocating the establishment of this route. The most recent representation came from the trans-Canada highway system association dated March 25. In this representation the president drew attention to a recent announcement made by the Prime Minister regarding the commencement of preliminary discussions to consider the establishment of this second route.

[Mr. Winch.]

The particular interest of Saskatoon in this problem derives not only from the common interest held by all major centres along this route, but we in Saskatoon believe that the present transportation system serving our city often places us in a very unfavourable position in regard to certain other centres in obtaining competitive rates on the railways.

I spoke on this matter on June 25 last year, as recorded on page 5186 of *Hansard*. If I may refer to what I said then, perhaps it will summarize the situation as far as our city is concerned. At that time I said:

Agreed charges and competitive rates are growing at a fast rate in western Canada as a whole but they are naturally being applied to those movements where alternative forms of transport offer serious competition to the railways. Saskatoon is too far from the west coast to share the advantages of sea transport via Vancouver, which has brought about some relief in freight rates in British Columbia and Alberta. Rail competition through the United States has led to some agreed charges for centres near the international border but Saskatoon is too far north to benefit from these.

The only effective competition with the railways as far as Saskatoon is concerned is highway transportation and load limits on the highways in the province of Saskatchewan are so low as to prevent this being an effective force. Cities on the trans-Canada highway to the south and others in Alberta and Manitoba where weight limits are higher have benefited considerably from agreed charges resulting from highway competition. Thus, while agreed charges are rapidly bringing lower transport costs to western Canada as a whole, Saskatoon is not sharing these benefits because it is poorly placed for service from competing forms of transport.

Many other hon. members from the western provinces have spoken on this subject and I do not wish to labour it at this time, but I wanted to make clear the particular position of Saskatoon and its interest in the establishment of a second trans-Canada highway. I might say that we from that area were greatly heartened by the announcement made by the Prime Minister, referred to by him again on March 8 of this year as found at page 1839 of *Hansard*, to the effect that preliminary discussions are taking place concerning a northern route in the western provinces. We urge the present Minister of Public Works and the cabinet generally to activate their studies of this problem in order that a resolution may be brought forward at an early date.

**Mr. Badanai:** Mr. Chairman, the construction of the trans-Canada highway can be compared with great Canadian projects of a magnitude such as that of the transcontinental railway of the nineteenth century, the St. Lawrence seaway, the trans-Canada pipe line and the proposed Saskatchewan dam, projects which required not only faith in the future of Canada and vast sums of money but also an almost visionary concept of what this country