

Mr. W. F. Maclean, member of parliament, Toronto; the sponsor of the present resolution (Mr. Kennedy), and the Hon. John Oliver, the rugged old, white-haired Premier of British Columbia. At that conference it was agreed that the two railways should get together and undertake a thorough examination into the various routes of the Peace River district, and the report brought in on that occasion is the one which has been referred to this afternoon—the 1925 report actually tabled in this house early in 1926. That report was signed by five engineers and it did actually recommend the Obed route for the consideration of parliament.

I think there are two considerations to be weighed by the house this afternoon. There is an obligation of honour in regard to the development of the Peace River area, and that obligation rests emphatically upon the Conservative and Liberal parties in this House. I am going to read now what my right hon. leader (Mr. Mackenzie King) said, because I am going to pin down both political parties to their previous declarations and the representations they made with respect to the development of that area. Speaking at Edmonton, 1924, my right hon. leader said:

I pledge myself that as soon as it is humanly possible the great Peace River country will be given that measure of railway relief that will bring to the pioneers of that country the outlet they have been so long denied, and will open up the country for prospective settlers.

I wish also to quote what the present leader of the upper house said, speaking in the same city on October 1, 1924. The Right Hon. Arthur Meighen, on that occasion, made this statement:

I have always urged that the north country should have railway relief. I cannot be accused of making futile promises, such as the Hon. Mackenzie King promised in the speech from the throne, at the opening of the last session of parliament, when he stated he was going to give railway relief to the north country, but nothing has been done.

Then again, in 1927, when the present member for Peace River (Mr. Kennedy) moved a further resolution in this House, the question was submitted to the committee on railways and canals. The hon. member read to the house this afternoon some of the submissions and recommendations of that committee, a certain recommendation having been made with regard to a general survey and reconnaissance of the whole district. Last year the hon. member for Peace River read to the house, submissions and recommendations made by Mr. Murray Hill of the Canadian National Railways, and I shall not repeat them this

afternoon. The hon. member for Peace River referred this afternoon to the fact that the Edmonton-Dunvegan and British Columbia Railway, which was sold to the Canadian Pacific Railway for \$26,000,000, has, since the tabling of the 1926 report, been placed upon a paying basis; and so far as I am concerned, despite the letters which my hon. friend the Minister of Railways has read to the House to-day, despite the letter from Sir Henry Thornton which endorses in toto the report of these three engineers; despite the letter, to my mind much preferable, from Mr. E. W. Beatty, K.C., who favours the development of the Peace River pass route as the final solution of the Peace River transportation outlet problem; I submit, with all deference to the hon. gentlemen who were signatories of the report, that the fullest investigation has not been made. The Minister of Railways was good enough last year, as a result of representations made to him, to promise that within a month of the termination of that session he would send the engineers to make a thorough report upon the entire transportation system, but I fear that these three engineers, who have subscribed their names to the report, have not been in the Peace River territory, or at least have not had an opportunity of making a final and exhaustive examination of the Peace pass, the Pine pass, the Monkman pass and the Aggie-Obed route recommended here.

I submit to my hon. friend that he take into consideration the representations made by his own leader—because I am pinning down both the Conservative and Liberal parties—in the famous pledge number five of the Winnipeg speech made during the general election of 1930. Most of the 40,000 settlers referred to by the hon. member for Peace River this afternoon went into that area under distinct promises made to them. Some of these promises for a transportation outlet were made by the various governments of my own province of British Columbia; some of the representations were made by the Alberta government, and many of them were made by the leaders of the two major political parties in Canada. The promise given by the right hon. gentleman opposite, to which I have just referred, is this:

We pledge ourselves to the improvement of the whole scheme of Canadian transportation northward by the completion of the Hudson Bay route, and the construction of such branches as may be necessary to render it most readily available to every part of Canada; to the Pacific slope by a Peace River outlet, and east and west by the development of the St. Lawrence waterways, and we pledge ourselves to aid existing traffic channels and to increase port facilities.