

I can see no reason why there should be any competition between eastern and western Canada with respect to services of one kind or another. Whatever is physically possible in any part of Canada can be made financially possible. There is no reason why the east as well as the west cannot have all the facilities they desire. I trust therefore that the minister will not argue that to accede to the request which has been made would not be financially possible.

In conclusion I would repeat my opening statement, that we of this group heartily support the resolution.

Mr. J. M. DECHENE (Athabaska): Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to raise my voice in support of the resolution offered by the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Irvine).

Strange as it may sound to Your Honour, this is the first occasion I have addressed the house since Your Honour has occupied the position of Speaker. I remember well only a few months ago when you, sir, and I sat in an obscure part of the chamber, trying to listen to the debates which at times reached us only as a faint echo. Since that time you have ascended the throne of the mighty I have not had an opportunity as yet to address you in your dignified position as Speaker of this house. Personally, I have remained within a seat or two of the seat I now occupy, and I believe that is as far as I can hope to get in this house.

I rise because the motion so ably proposed by the hon. member for Cariboo forms part of a programme and plan which I have often advocated in this house. I shall not delay the house to-day in going over that plan. I know how difficult it is for hon. members from the maritimes and the central provinces to understand fully what we are asking for. This is a vast country extending as it does from the forty-ninth parallel to the Arctic ocean.

I was pleased that the hon. member referred to the northwest in asking support for his motion. Athabaska is the gateway to this great north country. The building of an outlet to the Pacific ocean would prove a tremendous boon to the Peace River country and also to the northern parts of the western provinces. Not only would it prove a boon for the farmers in shipping their cattle, grain and dairy products, it would also be a great boon to our fishing industry and would help to bring about the further development of the oil and tar sands resources in the northern part of Athabaska and in the Northwest Territories.

Reference has been made to the Peace river. How pleasing it is to hear the word "peace" used in this house. How pleasing it

[Mr. Kuhl.]

is that hon. members are able to talk about peace instead of having almost all their time taken up with rumours of dissatisfaction, of riots, of rebellions, and all the signs of war that are appearing throughout this yet so sickly world. Those of us who know the great value of the Peace River district sometimes regret that it would be so easy to bring the instruments of war into that country. No Canadian has really enjoyed the feelings of peace, contentment and good will until he has stood on the shores of our great northern rivers, the Athabaska or the Peace, and communed with nature and thanked Providence for having so generously given of his greatness to this great north land.

The other day I read an extremely interesting article in the *Saturday Evening Post* by a United States engineer with the army of occupation. He told how Germany was cut off from sources of oil and gasoline, how she could get only a smattering of supplies from Roumania. But he described how, despite the bombardment by the allies, she continued to manufacture high-octane gasoline, superior to anything that we had, from coal. On reading that article I was reminded of the great coal resources of the west.

The hon. member referred to the tremendous area of coal in the Fort St. John area, but he could not speak too strongly of the possibilities of development there. That is only one small part of the vast coal resources of western Canada. Our resources of gas and oil are not increasing greatly and the day may not be too far distant when they will be greatly diminished. As I said once when I was trying to get the government to take action in the development of the tar sands in northern Alberta, the possession of oil is necessary if any nation is to be strong in war or in peace.

Oil was responsible for the breaking down of many of the negotiations after the last war. It was also responsible for the failure of many of the peace conferences after the last war. I need not repeat that to-day it is responsible for the disagreement in the UNO meeting now being held in the United States. Because of these vast resources known to be still available we do not need to worry. We know what has been done in Germany and we know that we have billions and billions of tons of coal available in western Canada. If we can properly develop our natural resources by carrying out the necessary research work Canada will stand in front of every nation in the world for having provided the necessary work for her people.

Every time you settle one thousand new settlers in western Canada on land such as