

*Trans-Canada Highway*

responsible for the defence of this continent. I believe it is our duty to see to it that there is a system of highways in Canada which is comparable with the system in the United States so that the United States people do not need to be worrying constantly over whether or not there are going to be highways up here to enable them to manoeuvre in case of trouble.

How came it about that this national inter-regional highway system was planned? Well, F. D. Roosevelt, on April 14, 1941, set up what was known as a national inter-regional highways committee under Thomas H. MacDonald, commissioner of public roads, to make a survey of the need for a system of express highways throughout the United States. May I suggest that probably the Prime Minister or the minister would do well to do something like that at a very early date in Canada. This committee recommended that the federal government provide \$750 million a year to help build 34,000 miles of rural and urban roads to comprise a proposed national inter-regional highway system. On January 12, 1944, President F. D. Roosevelt recommended that congress accept the report of this committee.

The results of this and other United States efforts are shown by figures in a schedule which I should like to have the privilege of putting on *Hansard*. I am not sure whether I shall have permission to do that, therefore I am going to run over hastily some of the figures which are involved. The schedule I have covers the years from 1919 to 1949 inclusive. In those years the United States government spent per capita the following sums of money: 66 cents in 1919—per capita that is. It works out to a lot of money—and in the following years 94 cents, 95 cents, 71 cents, 52 cents, 61 cents, 61 cents, 70 cents, 61 cents, 68 cents, 69 cents, \$1.32. A great increase occurred in 1930. In the following years, \$1.19, \$2.10, \$4.37, \$1.15, \$3.27, \$1.12, \$1.08, \$1.71, \$1.72, \$1.10, \$1.38, \$2.70, \$1.88, which brought them up to 1943. During the following years the appropriation dropped down considerably, particularly during the war, to 22 cents and probably nothing in the next year. But again in 1946, immediately the war was over, the appropriation rose to \$3.71 per capita, \$3.65 and \$3.51. There is a contribution which I would suggest that the Canadian authorities keep their eye on and do their best. Let Canada have a Canadian inter-regional highway system comparable with that in the United States.

May I say that western Canada is well along towards such a system already. A great amount of construction has gone on in the three prairie provinces and in British

Columbia, notwithstanding the relatively meagre resources at their disposal. For example in Alberta: In the first place, the Yellowhead pass road, in the main consisting of the Alberta provincial highway No. 16, runs from Lloydminster to Jasper Park gate, a distance of 360 miles. From Lloydminster to Edmonton it is gravel surface. From Edmonton to Seba Beach it is bituminous. From Seba Beach to Jasper Park gate it is first-class gravel. Much work and great expenditure have been put forth in respect to this highway.

The Kicking Horse pass highway, Alberta provincial highway No. 1, runs from Walsh to Banff Park gate, a distance of 302 miles. From Walsh to Medicine Hat it is low-type bituminous. From Medicine Hat to Bassano it is gravel road, third class. From Bassano to Gleichen it is new grade under construction. From Gleichen to Strathmore it is new grade and gravel. From Strathmore to Banff Park gate it is bituminous surface. The Crowsnest pass route is Alberta's provincial highways Nos. 1 and 3. From Walsh to Crowsnest via Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Macleod is a distance of 245 miles. From Walsh to Medicine Hat the road is low-type bituminous. From Medicine Hat to Taber it is first-class earth and gravel. From Taber to Pincher Creek it is bituminous, and from Pincher Creek to Crowsnest it is earth grade and gravel.

From these facts it can be readily seen that Alberta is alive right to her fingertips. If the federal government had been half as much alive as the provincial governments have been during the last fifteen years Canada would not have such deficient roads as we have in many cases at the present time. We do not need to worry about putting money at the disposal of governments that have done so much for roads as Alberta has.

Thus far Canada federally has made little or no systematic contribution towards Canadian highways. I said "systematic". There have been contributions. For example, in 1919 the dominion parliament granted \$20 million to assist the provinces in highway construction. It was to be awarded on the basis of \$80,000 flat to each province. It was limited to 40 per cent of the cost of construction or improvement. One hon. member, I think it was an hon. member representing Newfoundland, pointed out a moment ago that if that province is expected to pay one-half of the cost of the highway in order to get the dominion government to pay the other half, then that province never could build a highway and never could claim the 50 per cent.