

*Peace River Outlet—Mr. Hanson*

the plea of the hon. member for Peace River and urge upon the government that if this outlet cannot be constructed in any other way, it should be undertaken either as a direct policy of the government or as a measure of unemployment relief. This is an obligation which rests upon both parties and which has, I think, the endorsement of all sections of this house.

Mr. OLOF HANSON (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the resolution moved by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Kennedy). I congratulate the mover upon the able manner in which he has presented his case. The Peace River outlet to the Pacific coast is necessary in order to develop the resources of that part of our dominion. As has been said by previous speakers, our commerce has been developed eastward to the Atlantic ocean but in later years new markets have been discovered for our products and accommodation must be provided to handle this new movement. I should like to read a resolution passed by the Stewart board of trade, which reads as follows:

Whereas thousands of people have been migrating to the Peace river during the past two years, swelling the population of that country to a total of some 40,000;

And whereas in addition to vast agricultural development it has been demonstrated that northwestern Canada is rich in mineral deposits;

And whereas a tide water outlet has for some years been promised to the Peace River country;

And whereas a charter was granted for a line of railway from Stewart to the Finlay Forks some three years ago and certain preliminary surveys have been made of the route from Stewart to the point named, as a result of which the people of this community and the Peace River country have been led to anticipate stimulated development;

Be it therefore resolved that this board of trade ask Mr. Olof Hanson, member of parliament for this federal riding, to collaborate with other members of the federal parliament from Cariboo and Peace River with a view to putting questions on the order paper during the present session of the said parliament, that will have the effect of bringing out any and all information on this question of prime importance to the people of northwest Canada;

Be it further resolved that the questions so asked be so phrased as to bring out and make clear the intention of the government and/or the railways, if, when, and as soon as financial conditions permit of commitments for new undertakings.

Upon receiving a copy of this resolution, I took the matter up with the Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Manion) who advised me that the best way to bring the matter before the house would be when the Peace River outlet was under discussion. That

[Mr. Bury.]

is my reason for now placing this resolution upon Hansard. I have received similar resolutions from other public bodies in British Columbia. The chamber of commerce of Prince Rupert has passed a similar resolution on several occasions during the past five or six years, but as some of these are already on record it will not be necessary for me to read them.

Other speakers have gone into full detail in discussing this question, and it will not be necessary for me to repeat the figures given. I was pleased to hear the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals say that the government realizes that this outlet will have to be built sooner or later, but I submit that an early commencement of the work would be of great assistance in solving the unemployment problem, probably the greatest problem facing the government at the present time. As the last speaker has said, perhaps the government will consider this matter as a means of helping to relieve the unemployment situation.

I do not intend to discuss this matter any further, except to say that I am fully in accord with the resolution.

Hon. CHARLES STEWART (West Edmonton): Mr. Speaker, the Peace River outlet has been a much discussed question for a number of years. In 1912, when I joined the provincial government of Alberta, a survey was projected through from White Court via Grande Prairie and the Peace River pass to the coast. That survey resulted in bringing a great number of people into the country, particularly into the Grande Prairie district. In 1913 I was delegated by the provincial government to pay a visit to that country to look into its potentialities and to see whether or not it was advisable for the government to embark upon railway construction into that territory. After an extended trip through the country by buckboard I came back to Edmonton and reported to the government of the Hon. Mr. Sifton that in my opinion a railroad should be projected at once into that country, with the ultimate object of its completion through to the coast. That road was built and served a useful purpose for a number of years. The hon. member for East Edmonton (Mr. Bury) has intimated that this was rather an indifferent road, but at all events it enabled the people to get in and out of the country from Edmonton westward. The road was not projected through to the coast, and that is the only possible solution of the difficulties which face the people in that part of the province. But it must be borne in mind, as pointed out by several speakers this afternoon, that very considerable concessions in the way