

Trans-Canada Highway Act

kind of road or highway. We could move in that direction without too much difficulty and we should attempt to ensure that our roads are built on a co-ordinated, integrated and planned basis with the federal government accepting the responsibility of financial participation.

I should like to make reference to a subject on which the minister was reluctant to give detailed information as to what the plans were but I believe he intimated what they were and I was able to reach certain conclusions. I refer to what we classify as a second trans-Canada highway in the west which is pretty well confined to the four western provinces. In referring to this project as a second trans-Canada highway I do not wish to detract from the suggestion of hon. gentlemen from the maritimes. I merely used the phrase because it is the term which has grown up in the west with reference to this road.

In answer to a question asked by the hon. member for Assiniboia as reported at page 898 of *Hansard* of February 10, the minister was kind enough to give us certain information. I should like to make reference to the figures he used as they apply to the four western provinces to indicate that we are on the verge of being in a position to participate in the construction of a second cross country, interprovincial highway in the four western provinces. We find that British Columbia has 210 miles to be completed in the province which represents 37 per cent of the route. Alberta has 6 miles to complete which represents about 2 per cent of the route. Saskatchewan has completed its section of the highway and Manitoba has 16 miles to complete which represents 5 per cent of the route. Excluding British Columbia we find that the highway is practically completed through the three prairie provinces. This indicates that there is less than 15 per cent of that road to be completed.

The attitude of British Columbia has been made known to the previous government and I do not doubt that it has been made known to this government. British Columbia is willing to accept some form of federal contribution toward highway building costs for this second trans-Canada highway. I shall relate in a moment the route we envisage. A great proportion of it runs through the riding I represent. We had the pleasure of a visit to Skeena from the Minister of Public Works—

Mr. Green: It did not do me much good.

Mr. Howard: I am sorry that the minister was so busy that he could not stay and take a ride over the roads there to see the shape they are in so he would realize the need that exists for participation by the federal government in the cost of the construction of

roads. Did I understand the minister to say that his visit did not do much good?

Mr. Green: It was not very effective. I was on a political trip.

Mr. Howard: I would say that the minister's trip was most effective because that was one of the reasons why we got such a large majority and we would like him to come back again.

The route planned as far as northern British Columbia is concerned is this. It should reflect the agreement that exists at this time with respect to the first trans-Canada highway, namely that it crosses a body of water and goes to Vancouver island. The same principle should apply in the north central coastal part of British Columbia in that the road should extend to the Queen Charlotte islands. That should be included in the arrangements I know the minister is on the verge of entering into with the province with respect to financing. The route should run along the present provincial road that is on the Queen Charlotte islands from Queen Charlotte city through Port Clements to Massett. Then it should extend along highway 16 through Prince Rupert, Terrace, Hazelton, Smithers, Burns Lake—to name but a few of the larger communities in that area—and on to Prince George. When we get to Prince George we have to either go a number of miles out of our way north through Fort St. John or we have to go many hundreds of miles south to get to Alberta. There is a gap of some 100 miles between Prince George and a place called McBride where there is no highway at the present time. The C.N.R. goes through but there is no road. This should be included in the route so people who live in northern British Columbia or Alberta may travel in a direct line without having to go out of their way hundreds of miles to reach their destination.

In northern Alberta the people from Edmonton are also quite interested in this road and so are the people in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The route is there; it is laid out. There are roads there now. This government should expand the policy it has toward the present trans-Canada highway. Additional payments should be made on some sort of formula, reflecting an expansion of highway policy and payments should be made to cover this suggested route. Whether it is called a second trans-Canada or an inter-provincial highway is immaterial. This philosophy should be undertaken and in as much as within the next couple of years the trans-Canada highway will be pretty much completed it is time now to start negotiating with the provinces or give an assurance to the provinces of the west