

to Fort William was 63½ cents in 1921, in 1922 the rate was lowered to 45 cents; another reduction took place in 1924 to 43 cents, and in 1925 the rate was lowered to 35½ cents, which I think is the present rate. The rate per hundred pounds from Grande Prairie to Vancouver was in 1921, 58½ cents; in 1922, 48 cents; in 1923, 43 cents; in 1924, 39½ cents and in 1925, 28 cents. The present rate to Vancouver is less than half the rate which obtained in 1921, while the rate to Fort William is a little more than half that which obtained in 1921.

Mr. HANSON (Skeena): Would the rate to Prince Rupert be the same?

Mr. MANION: I have not that information before me but it seems to me that it is reasonable to suppose that the rates would be similar. In view of all these facts, I ask my hon. friend if these rates are not fairly reasonable in view of the distances?

Mr. KENNEDY (Peace River): They may be considering the distances, but the distance might be cut in two.

Mr. MANION: The distance to Fort William would not be changed; the distance to Vancouver would be decreased but it would not be cut in half.

Mr. KENNEDY (Peace River): It would be to Stewart.

Mr. MANION: I do not know whether or not the construction of this outlet would bring about a material lowering in the rates. I do not profess to be any more than an amateur in dealing with freight rates, and I am afraid that is true of most hon. members.

The hon. member has placed this matter fairly and squarely before the house and the government will have to decide whether or not this construction can be carried on as an unemployment relief scheme. Apparently neither railway is satisfied to carry this work through without the government paying the bills. I presume that either of them would be glad to see it done if someone else would pay the bills, but neither of the railways is prepared to pay them. So that having fairly placed his case before the government, the hon. member, I suggest, should be satisfied and should withdraw his motion, leaving it to the government to decide whether the matter should be regarded as an unemployment relief measure, as he proposed in his closing remarks, or one for general development purposes. I suggest that he should leave it to the government to say whether it can see its way clear to spend this rather large

[Mr. Manion.]

amount of money at the present time under present somewhat stringent financial conditions, in order to provide a shorter outlet from the Peace River district. I submit that in all fairness to my hon. friend, with whom I am in sympathy, and I can assure him that at any rate the subject will be given fair consideration by the government. At the moment, however, I cannot state what the policy of the government ultimately will be.

Hon. IAN MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Kennedy) is entitled to the congratulations of all other members of this house, and particularly, if I may say so, of the members from western Canada, upon the very fair-minded and comprehensive way in which he has submitted this resolution to the consideration of parliament. I think also that the Minister of Railways (Mr. Manion) has made a very fair presentation of the attitude of the government towards this most important scheme of railway development.

It is very much to be regretted—and this applies to both political parties—that the attitude of caution, and of considered caution, which was adopted this afternoon by the Minister of Railways, was not adopted by the spokesmen of the various political parties during the different campaigns from 1926 to 1930 inclusive. Those of us who have knowledge of the Peace River situation and who have taken the trouble to look up the records of parliament will recall that ever since 1922, during every session of parliament, this question has been adduced for the consideration of the members of this house. I recall that my hon. friend who sponsors this resolution to-day brought the matter to the attention of the house in 1922 when, as a result of his representations, a vote of \$50,000 was passed by the house for the undertaking of a reconnaissance survey of the district, a vote which was amplified by a further contribution of \$75,000 in the subsequent year, 1923. In 1924, as was intimated last year by the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Garland), who made a substantial and exhaustive contribution to the debate upon the history of the Peace River development, a meeting was held in the office of the Minister of Railways, at that time the Right Hon. George P. Graham, at which there were present the following gentlemen: Sir Henry Thornton, president of the Canadian National Railways; Mr. E. W. Beatty, K.C., president of the Canadian Pacific Railway; Hon. Mr. Greenfield, Premier of Alberta; Hon. Verner Smith, Minister of Railways of Alberta;