

us who come from British Columbia, and sometimes those coming from the prairie provinces as well, have to put up such a terrible fight for what we obtain. We see proposals advanced now to develop the St. Lawrence river, on which hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent; and to do what? To open up an inlet right up to the city of Toronto. Those of us who come from British Columbia should serve notice on the government right now—or on any government—that we in the west had better have a little more consideration before they start spending many more millions of dollars in the central provinces.

I have no desire to delay the passage of this resolution; as I say, it is my hope that it may come to a vote. Let me assure the hon. member for Cariboo and other hon. members that the resolution has my hearty support.

Mr. W. F. KUHLE (Jasper-Edson): Mr. Speaker, as was indicated by the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Irvine), my colleague, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Low), who is the leader of this group, is keenly interested in the resolution. Had he not been unavoidably absent I am sure that on behalf of this group he would have been pleased to support the motion. However, inasmuch as the constituency of Jasper-Edson, which it is my privilege to represent, is the neighbouring constituency of Peace River, my leader has asked me to say a few words on his behalf in support of the resolution.

It has already been intimated by those who have spoken that for the last twenty-five years at least the Peace River outlet has been promised by the leaders of political parties. It would seem now that the time has long since come when that promise should be kept.

I do not believe it is necessary for me to add to the statistics already presented by the hon. member for Cariboo. What he has put on the record is adequate, and anything I might add would be superfluous. There are however a few general thoughts which have not been expressed, and to which I should like to give utterance.

It seems that in the discussion of matters of this kind we cannot get away from the fundamentals of economics. I noticed that on several occasions, before reaching the conclusion of his address, the hon. member for Cariboo related this resolution to those economic principles in which he contends he believes. I think it appropriate therefore to say a few words in that connection.

I am not sure that I agree altogether with all the reasons offered by the hon. member as

to why the people of the Peace River area should be permitted this outlet. I consider that the purpose of the outlet, which might take the form of a railway or a highway, is primarily that of serving the people of the community. The Peace River outlet, as indicated, certainly would reduce the cost of shipping goods in and out of the area in question. That being so, surely there can be no reason why the project should not be carried out.

The hon. member for Cariboo stated that if this project, and others in close proximity to it, were undertaken, probably all the unemployed veterans in Canada could be put to work. I share with the hon. member, and with all others of like mind, the desire to see ex-servicemen receive the highest possible income at the earliest possible time. I cannot agree however that the construction of this or any other railroad or highway should be carried on for the express purpose of putting people to work.

Mr. IRVINE: I agree with that.

Mr. KUHLE: If we are interested only in seeing that people are employed, then in the event of the carrying out of this project, rather than using the most modern machinery and equipment for the building of railroads and highways we should see to it that the work is done by the use of picks, shovels and wheelbarrows. If this were done there would be plenty of work for large numbers of people for a long time to come. So I cannot agree that our purpose in any way should be that of putting people to work on the project; the project should be the purpose, whether it requires a hundred or a thousand men.

I cannot anticipate what reply the minister is going to make to the arguments presented. I trust and hope however that we shall not be confronted with the statement that there are not sufficient funds to carry out this and other public works. I believe we have heard sufficient arguments, both in and out of the house, to establish for all time the fact that if we can finance a war there is no reason why we cannot finance any project for peace. The only argument I would consider as reasonable from the minister would be that at this time, or for a few years in the future, we may have a greater need for materials and manpower than we have for the building of this route. Otherwise I cannot think of any logical reason why the project should not be undertaken immediately. Surely the minister would not be logical and consistent if he were to plead a lack of funds, or that we must have the funds for other purposes.

Turning to what has been said by the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid),