

hausted; the work could be usefully carried on and give employment to several hundred men for several weeks longer; it would be proposed, at the same unit cost, to continue that work. With respect to public works and similar undertakings, the government has considered no claims of that character at the moment, because I am bound to say, as I think my hon. friend will agree, that the estimates passed last session were very generous in their appropriation of public moneys, and we are endeavouring to see that those moneys are expended with a view to providing employment. For instance, there is the elevator at Lethbridge referred to during the election. A contract was let for the foundation, but no contract was let for the superstructure. That will provide work for a considerable number of people. And so on down through the main and supplementary estimates of last session. It may be that between now and next session there may be a limited number of such undertakings. It is provided that a return of such expenditures shall be tabled within fifteen days after the opening of parliament.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Will any new public works be proceeded with without this house knowing anything about it?

Mr. BENNETT: In the very nature of things it would have to be.

Mr. LAPOINTE: My hon. friend admits that it is a large order.

Mr. BENNETT: I do, without any question. But I think the safeguards of the Public Service Act with respect to tenders are a sufficient guarantee as to the money being properly expended.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): Is any of this appropriation for the construction of a national highway, and what are the intentions of the government with respect to the building of such a highway?

Mr. BENNETT: There has been much discussion of the matter. What is proposed is that, as many of the provinces have hard surfaced roads and many paved roads, they shall designate which road is the main artery of travel, and that road shall be placed upon such standard as to construction, as to curbs, and as to grades as the Dominion set up some time ago in connection with national highways under the former statute; assistance to be given to the provinces in that regard, they carrying on the work and not the federal authorities. The work intended to connect

existing highways to form the national highway from British Columbia to Cape Breton will be carried on out of this appropriation.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Did not my hon. friend's statement in the course of the campaign indicate that a national highway would be constructed by the federal government itself?

Mr. BENNETT: I might have corrected the right hon. gentleman yesterday. I was very careful in this house, both before and during the campaign, to point out that there is no intention of acquiring a right of way in building a national highway. What is intended is to connect up this country with a national highway. There are a few hundred miles of territory separating Ontario from Manitoba, and there are a few miles in British Columbia, to which the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Mackenzie) has referred. That road is now in process of construction, partly by the federal authorities and partly by the provincial government. When that road is completed, that is to say, the road near Big Bend past Revelstoke and coming towards the east, there will then be a highway from the Pacific slope to Manitoba; and further north, to the eastern end of Manitoba, there are about eighty-seven miles of territory through which the road has not yet been slashed or the alders cut, leading to the boundary of Ontario; and in Ontario, to connect with the present King's highway in Ontario, there is, I am told, a distance not exceeding four hundred miles where work yet remains to be done. That work, inasmuch as it will give employment to a large number of people, it is proposed to endeavour to proceed with by arrangement between the provincial governments and the Dominion, the Dominion undertaking to assist them in the payment of the extra cost involved, as well as making a substantial grant towards the building of the road itself.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Is that what the Prime Minister calls the immediate construction of a great Canadian national highway?

Mr. BENNETT: It certainly is.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend speaking at St. John, New Brunswick, on June 30: is reported in the St. John Telegraph-Journal as having said:

We say that the federal government under our administration will build a great national highway in Canada.

Is that report incorrect or does it mean what it says?