

*Unemployment Continuance Act*

work has been carried on not only to relieve unemployment but to create a link between the east and the west. During the last general election, whether Liberal or Conservative, we were as one on this question, we felt that this highway should follow the course of the Ferguson highway via North Bay, Haileybury, Cochrane and Hearst to the Manitoba border. Immediately this government came into power some dilly-dallying took place, and an attempt was made to unload the responsibilities upon the shoulders of the provincial government. I have referred already to the statement of the former Premier of Ontario to the effect that the whole responsibility rested upon this administration. The following year the provincial government stated it was sending out surveying parties and aeroplanes to study the ground in order to decide upon a suitable route but so far no definite reply has been given by this government to the provincial government.

It must be admitted that the Prime Minister has many difficulties with which to contend, but he always faces them very squarely and I do not understand why he has not taken a hand in this matter. We have the spectacle of two sections of northern Ontario being opposed to the construction of this highway along certain routes. More money has been spent on this highway for unemployment relief in the southern part of northern Ontario than has been spent in the northern part. It is true that as far as the Ferguson highway is concerned many fine bridges have been built and many stretches of road have been straightened, but nothing has been done west or south of the town of Hearst. Apparently we are fighting a losing battle as far as the trans-Canada highway is concerned. I mean literally what I say, but I have sufficient confidence and faith in the ability and capacity of the present Minister of Labour who represents northern Ontario, to believe he will see that the people in our section are given a fair show. I do not want to believe anything will be done on account of political expediency, or that the provincial government will favour the southern section of northern Ontario because it has a larger population than we have. Within the last ten years the agricultural population in my constituency has increased over 800 per cent, and within the short period of fifteen or twenty years we shall have a larger population in the northern than they have in the southern portion of northern Ontario. Therefore I do not want to believe that any action will be taken on account of political expediency. I hope and trust that the present

[Mr. Bradette.]

administration, because they are defraying fifty per cent of the cost of the trans-Canada highway construction, will, if possible, decide now, before any more money is voted for such construction, where the road should run. We want to be logical; we do not want to hog the whole thing, but we know what the people are thinking in other sections and we know on account of their larger population they are better organized than we are. The basis of a larger population should not signify anything to the present government; they should be willing to give us what is coming to us. We do not want any special favours; we want just what is our due. I have already done a lot of work for the solution of that important problem.

Further, accompanied by a very strong delegation from the constituency of Labelle, including the hon. member representing it, I had an interview with the Premier of Quebec asking for direct communication between the city of Montreal and the Cochrane district on towards Hearst, thereby saving at least 200 miles. There were with me at the time several members of the Quebec legislature, and I had also the support of an influential gentleman from Montreal who thought this was the most practical and feasible route.

One thing that surprised me in the discussion on the routing of the transcontinental highway is that the only section that seems to be directly interested is the northern section of northern Ontario. Saturday Night and other influential papers in Toronto have said that the whole of Canada should take a hand in the routing of the trans-Canada highway in Nippissing and northern Ontario. I am sorry that so far no influential bodies of men in Canada outside of those in northern Ontario have taken an interest in the question. I hope from now on everybody will be interested and realize that on account of the enormous sums taken out of the public treasury for this work, he has a direct interest in such a construction.

I have stated that at present the province of Quebec has no direct communication with the trans-Canada highway in order to reach Manitoba or the Pacific coast; in order to do so people from Quebec will have to travel by the Montreal-Ottawa road to Ottawa, then on to North Bay and thence northwards towards Cochrane, or go around the north shore of lake Superior. On the other hand, the natural route, the one which should be taken so far as Quebec and the maritimes are concerned, is one that will give access by Mont Laurier to Senneterre.

In the Cochrane district to the Quebec border, there are only fifty miles of a link to