

Trans-Canada Highway

be coming in by hundreds and thousands. The Hon. W. F. Finlayson, Minister of Lands and Forests of the Ontario government, has stated that within a very short period there will be constructed a highway from Cochrane to tidewater on James bay, and many people are going to make use of this highway to visit this north country in order to fish or hunt, and to enjoy its wonderful and invigorating climate during the summer and winter months.

To some people it may seem to be wrong to ask for a large expenditure of money for this purpose, but the same argument was used only a few years ago when it was suggested that the Timiskaming and Northern Ontario railway should be extended. The results obtained by that extension have been a revelation, not only to the province of Ontario but to the dominion as a whole. The northern section of the province has proved to be a treasure house for the whole of Canada. This is the opinion of Mr. Whar-ton Shaw, as expressed in an article which appeared in MacLean's Magazine of March 1, 1930.

I realize the position in which any government is put in trying to choose a route. If the southern route is adopted, the northern sections of the province of Ontario will be left without communication westward for at least twenty years to come. The northern is the shortest route, running west from Hearst along the Canadian National railway to Richam and I believe that the solution of that important and complicated problem will be found in my proposed resolution, which reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this house, all moneys voted for that purpose will be spent on a fifty-fifty basis, on the La Reine, Cochrane, Hearst, Nakina and Sioux Lookout section on the one hand and the Sault Ste. Marie, Fort William, Port Arthur and Kenora, on the other.

Because of the physical obstacles to be surmounted, it is almost impossible to consider the construction of the north shore route, but I believe two alternate routes should be constructed at the same time. The people of Canada are entitled to a solution of this problem in a manner which will satisfy every section of northern Ontario. The construction of this highway should be considered in the same manner as are similar projects in the United States. Their highways are built on a direct line and take into consideration the needs not only of the tourist but of the truck traffic.

We in the northern section of northern Ontario are ready to come to a sincere and reasonable compromise on this question. I believe the hon. member for East Algoma (Mr. Nicholson) stated a few months ago

[Mr. Bradette.]

that the Mississagi route would be a good compromise between the northern and southern sections of the province, that route to meet the Ferguson highway at Oba on the Canadian National railway, about 55 miles from the town of Hearst, and then continue in a south-westerly direction to Port Arthur and Fort William. I do not believe that that would be a fair compromise as the proposed route would not go far enough west to take in Nakina and that section of the country. The population there is not large at the present time but it will increase. We should join with the other section west of Long Lac so as to include Nakina.

Every hon. member should be interested in this problem because every section of the country is interested. This is not a regional question, it is one which affects the country as a whole because every person, and particularly the motorist will be interested in travel over this route. I believe it was stated in this house two or three years ago that the geographical division of Canada was a monstrous anomaly, but the people of Canada do not realize the wonderful heritage they have in northern Ontario. We used to think that that section of Canada was practically a barren country, but I repeat that it is really the treasure house of Canada in land, in mines, in water powers, in forests and all kinds of undeveloped resources. A statement was made by Hon. Charles McCrea, provincial Minister of Mines, speaking in Hamilton during the last election, that for every dollar invested in northern Ontario a return of \$10 was received, and I agree absolutely with that statement.

I believe the construction of this highway would be a great step in the direction of bringing about solidarity within Canada. It may surprise some hon. members to know that to us in northern Ontario, Winnipeg, as far as news is concerned, seems as far away as is Russia. We are in touch with municipal activities in the cities of Toronto and Hamilton and other centres of population to the south of us, but we hear nothing of Winnipeg unless it is in connection with a strike or something of that kind. I do not desire to prophesy, but I cannot help predicting that within a very short time millions of prosperous contented people will be found in this section of the country. There are enormous undeveloped natural resources and the construction of this highway would provide one means of development. I do not make this appeal from a partisan point of view. This parliament stands before the tribunal of public opinion to see to it that we be given what was promised last July.