

Trans-Canada Highway Act

but the agreements are made with the people who happen to be forming the government at the time the agreement is signed. In the province of Quebec there is very little to suggest that that government does not have the support of the people of that province.

Mr. Bourget: Oh, no!

Mr. Green: I do not want to get into any argument.

Mr. Bourget: You had better not.

Mr. Chevrier: You could get into one very easily.

Mr. Green: I suspect there has been a lot of wishful thinking going on here this afternoon. However, the fact is that the government of the province of Quebec did not see fit to make an agreement and any federal government, no matter what party formed it, would be asking for trouble if it started telling any province in Canada that it ought to be doing this or that.

Mr. Bourget: That is all right.

Mr. Green: We say that the route through the province of Quebec, which would probably be the trans-Canada highway, is a mighty good road and it is paved and I believe throughout most of its length it is certainly up to the standard of the trans-Canada highway in any other province.

Mr. Bourget: And the people of Quebec are helping to pay for 50 per cent of it.

Mr. Green: In so far as having a first-class paved highway through the province of Quebec is concerned joining up with the trans-Canada in the other provinces, the federal government can have very little cause for complaint.

Mention has been made of the fact that we are merely continuing the policy of the former government. To a degree that is true, although I do point out that ever since 1936—certainly, it was 1930—something—I have been shouting my head off in the house here for a trans-Canada highway. I was just afraid that some hon. members might have some of those old speeches going back that far. The prodding, the urging and the trouble raising were not necessary in 1956; that had all been done years before. I suppose, if one is to be absolutely fair he should say that that government moved at about the time that it had the support of the people of the country behind it for a trans-Canada highway policy.

I know the hon. member for Assiniboia has a very low opinion of the present government and of the last government but I think usually they have to move when the people are ready

to move on a policy, and perhaps we shall not do quite as badly as the hon. member suggested this afternoon.

In fairness to the present government, I should point out that in addition to hurrying along the trans-Canada highway program—and more was spent last year than in any other year, and there will be quite a few million dollars more spent during 1959 and 1960 than were spent in the last fiscal year—we have undertaken a roads to resources program which could involve a total of \$150 million, divided into \$15 million for each of the provinces.

I think it would be unwise for me at this session to attempt to deal with a highway policy which would be undertaken once the trans-Canada highway is completed. You know, human nature is the same no matter where we sit in the house.

Mr. Bourget: I am not too sure about that now.

Mr. Green: The minute we start talking about what is going to happen after the trans-Canada highway is completed there will be great danger, I think, of delay in the completion of the trans-Canada highway itself. The actual problem dealt with by the legislation, amendment of which is sought, is the completion of a trans-Canada highway to join the ten provinces of this nation by a first-class road. That is our main objective. That is the objective we aim to reach by the end of 1960.

The suggestions which have been made in the course of the debate will be extremely helpful in working out the details of a policy to follow the completion of the trans-Canada highway. I think the hon. member for Bonaville-Twillington spoke with considerable common sense. Perhaps I should not say "for a change".

Mr. Pickersgill: I was just trying to protect the treasury.

Mr. Green: He spoke with considerable common sense when he said that perhaps the time has come to look at the problem in each province and that it may not be possible to devise an over-all policy under which exactly the same things will be done in each one of the ten provinces. I am not making any commitments or getting out on any limbs but that just struck me as having considerable merit. I can assure hon. members that we shall try to follow the trans-Canada highway program with a highway policy based on the national interest. Mind you, it is very easy to be convinced that the highway policy that should be adopted by the nation is the one which best suits one's own province. I could make a wonderful