

Trans-Canada Highway

priority of construction. Not only the original construction cost but the cost of maintenance should be given consideration, and I contend that maintenance would be less on the Yellowhead route, owing to lighter snowfall and the ease with which any slides that might occur could be cleared away. The mountain scenery is equally glorious in each of these areas, but tourists today demand highways of 22 to 24 feet, without those turns which reach beyond the point of enjoyment.

I submit that commercially the Yellowhead route west of Winnipeg would serve the greatest number of people living in the prairie provinces. The recent oil developments in the central part of the prairies, as well as the potential resources of the northern part of the prairie provinces and Northwest Territories, are strong reasons why the highway should follow the Yellowhead route. The Yellowhead route is the central route, and would serve by far the largest park areas west of the great lakes. It is as necessary to have good highways as it is good railways. The Yellowhead route passing through four national parks and five provincial parks would be a veritable magnet for the tourist trade.

During the present session the citizens of Canada, and in particular the members of this house, have been made more conscious of the necessity for national defence. With the realization that war is still a possibility, would it not be shortsighted indeed to construct a trans-Canada highway without giving adequate consideration to the availability of this highway for defence purposes? Our great ally and friendly neighbour to the south, the United States of America, has been ever-conscious of the necessity for protecting the back door on the northwestern border. The joint effort in the construction of the Alaska highway is firm evidence of the practical co-operation between Canada and the United States in defence projects. During the last session of congress, a bill was passed anticipating the construction of a railroad by the United States from Prince George to Fairbanks, Alaska, costing approximately \$200 million. Just last month the President of the United States signed this bill which authorizes plans for an immediate survey of this proposed railway. At present there is a railroad in the province of British Columbia which could be used as a feeder for the Prince George-Alaska line, but two highways could also be utilized as secondary feeders if the Yellowhead pass were used for the trans-Canada project, which would make the military supply system less vulnerable, either to climatic conditions or to military attack.

[Mr. Macdonald (Edmonton East).]

In overlooking the Yellowhead pass we question whether sufficient consideration has been given to defence highway supply routes such as (1) south-north route through the interior of British Columbia from the United States border to Prince George and (2) the Alberta highway from Montana to Edmonton which could be linked up with Prince George by the extension of the trans-Canada highway west from Edmonton via the Yellowhead, with a branch to Prince George, British Columbia.

A highway along this route of the Yellowhead pass would serve the two largest ports on the Pacific coast, Vancouver and Prince Rupert, also Skagway via the Alaska highway. The Yellowhead route would join the Alaska highway at Edmonton as well as give direct connection with the Mackenzie highway to Great Slave lake.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, may I repeat that I am not dogmatically suggesting that the Yellowhead route be chosen. On the contrary, I am definitely suggesting that a fact-finding board or highway commission be set up to secure evidence as to what route is preferable for this great Canadian national undertaking.

Mr. D. F. Brown (Essex West): I should like to say a word, Mr. Speaker, in support of the principle of this resolution which may, of course, result at some time in the bringing in to this house of a bill for the establishment of the trans-Canada highway. I do so not having in mind the route either in the maritime provinces or in the western provinces.

I hear a voice, Mr. Speaker, but I see no one.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): You had better grow up; then you will see some of them.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): I am not particularly interested in the conflict between western members as to the route that it ought to take there. I am interested, however, that there shall be a trans-Canada highway which shall lead from one side of Canada to the other so that the products of our mines, farms and factories may be transported in a manner which may seem advisable to those using trucks, and that our people may be transported by bus, but primarily that this route may be a haven or a paradise for the tourists that enter our country.

One of the largest industries—I think it is the second largest—providing United States dollars to the Dominion of Canada is the tourist industry. For that reason in the province of Ontario I believe I would rather support a move to establish such a route along the north shore of lake Superior. I