

Trans-Canada Highway Act

total cost, plus 90 per cent of 10 per cent, could be paid, as under the present agreement, to all provinces which have to build the national average or less. Suppose, however, the mileage to be built in a province was above the national average. An arrangement could then be worked out under which the federal government would pay a greater proportion of the cost. I might say that at the existing rate, under the existing plan, 40 per cent of the total mileage in the country would be covered, a mileage of 1,718. Where the mileage to be built in a province amounted to four miles per 10,000 of the population the federal government would pay 60 per cent of the cost, and if the mileage rose to six, the federal government would pay 65 per cent of the cost. For percentages in excess of six miles per ten thousand, the federal government would pay 70 per cent of the cost.

I have made some rough calculations as to what this would cost the federal government, and from these calculations, based on estimates of the cost of completion of the trans-Canada highway given by the minister last year, I find that both Alberta and Ontario would complete their mileage under the existing agreement. Manitoba would receive an increased grant of \$2 million; British Columbia would get an increase of \$9 million; Nova Scotia an increase of \$3.5 million; Saskatchewan, \$2.5 million; New Brunswick, \$10 million; Prince Edward Island, \$1.5 million; and Newfoundland an increased grant of \$5 million; making a total cost to the federal treasury of \$33.5 million.

I recognize, of course, that this scheme which I have broadly outlined does not take into account the various other factors which make the building of the trans-Canada highway so difficult for provinces such as the maritime provinces and British Columbia.

The motor business in Canada is becoming very big business indeed. In 1920 there were 400,000 cars and trucks in Canada; in 1930, there were 1,250,000; in 1940, 1,500,000; in 1950, 2,500,000; and in 1960 there will be more than 5,000,000, an increase of 100 per cent in the last ten years. It is estimated that during the present year Canadians will travel 40,000 million miles over Canadian roads. The amount received in registration fees and gasoline taxes in 1958 was just less than \$500 million, or almost 25 per cent of the total net general revenue of all 10 provinces. Certainly these figures go to show that motor traffic in Canada has grown very fast indeed during the last 20 years.

In my own province the growth has been slower. Nevertheless, in the last five years

[Mr. Batten.]

there has been a speeding up of the development of the motor industry in the island province. In 1940, for example, there were 4,378 cars and 1,306 trucks, making a total of 5,834 vehicles; in 1949, just before confederation, the total was 11,500; and in 1950 it had increased to 16,375. In the last ten or eleven years since confederation, however, the total number of cars and trucks on the island increased to 52,578, a threefold increase in nine years. I draw these figures to the attention of the committee in order to illustrate the demand in the province for increased highway construction. As everybody knows, highway construction begets more construction; the more roads you build, the greater the demand will be.

As was pointed out two days ago by the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador, who took the opportunity to recount some of the history of transportation in Newfoundland, there are large distances around the coast where the provincial government must construct its own roads. The demand for this type of road is so great that there is not enough money left over for any rapid progress to be made in connection with the trans-Canada highway.

Certainly there has been great progress made in connection with highway construction in Canada, though nothing compared with the progress which has been made in the United States. I recognize that the conditions are different. However, in the United States and also in Canada, we have devoted great research into the building of automobiles and trucks but we have not done the same amount of research work, or the same type of research, with regard to the roads over which vehicles have to travel. I do not think road construction in Canada has kept pace with the advance in the construction of motor vehicles. We have almost half a million miles of roads in Canada. Of this total, one mile in ten is paved, 4.5 miles in ten are gravel surfaced and 4.5 miles in ten have an earth surface. Road mileage in Newfoundland at the end of operations in 1959 resulted in the following picture:

Paved highways	234 miles
Gravel highways	2,930 miles
Motorable secondary roads	454 miles
Non-motorable secondary roads	785 miles
Local roads	3,000 miles

In the last ten years 1,600 miles of road have been constructed in the province of Newfoundland. In 1959 there were 138 road projects undertaken. Expenditures for this construction and for the maintenance of roads that had been built before that amounted to an all-time high of \$18 million. The sum of \$18 million may not be a lot of money to a province like British Columbia or Ontario