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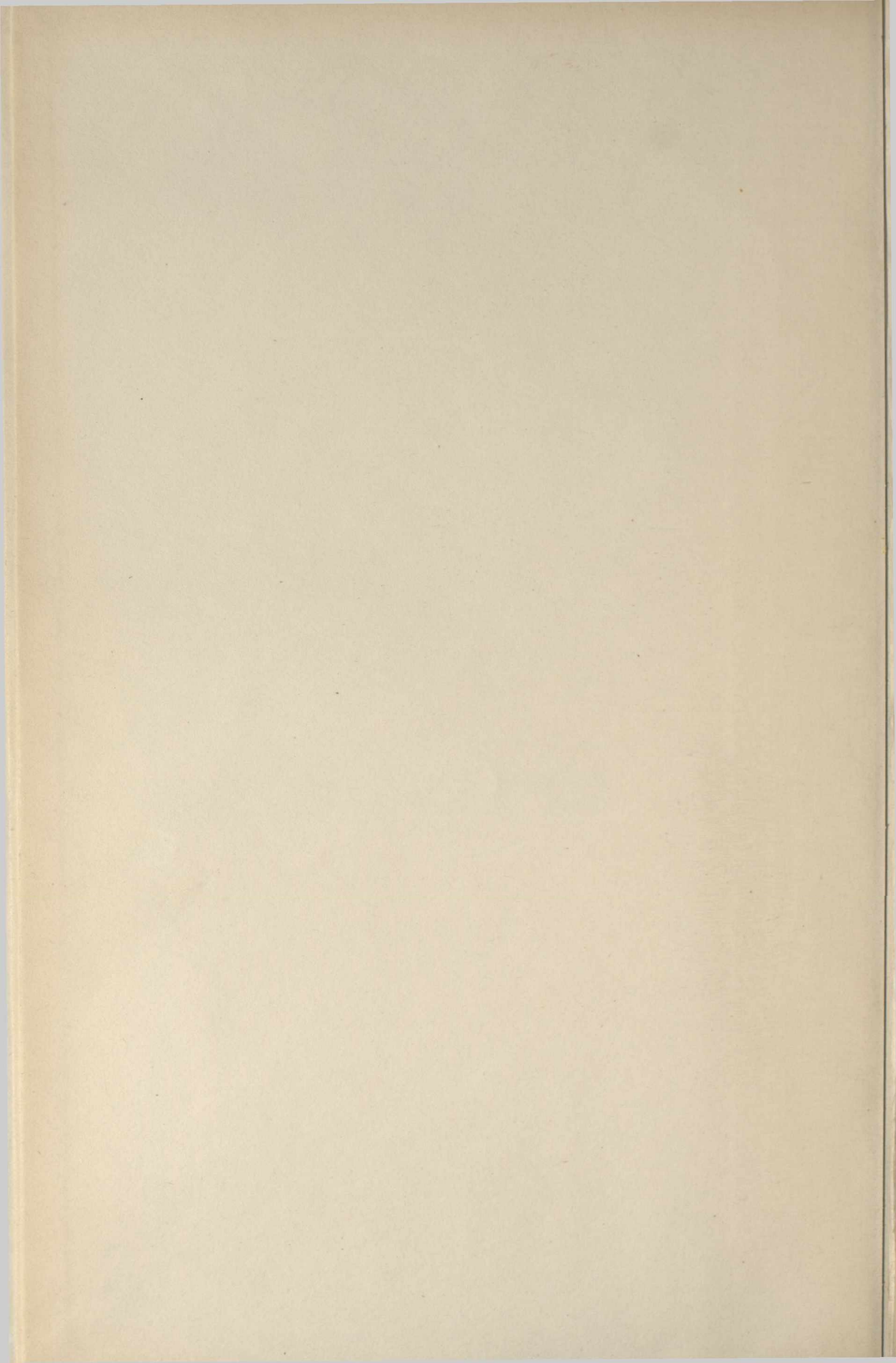
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THE SENATE OF CANADA



REPORT

OF THE

STANDING COMMITTEE

ON

TOURIST TRAFFIC

The Honourable W. A. Buchanan, Chairman

APPENDIX

Evidence submitted *re* tourist possibilities of the Alaska Highway

OTTAWA  
EDMOND CLOUTIER, C.M.G., B.A., L.Ph.,  
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY  
CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY  
1946

MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON TOURIST TRAFFIC

The Honourable W. A. BUCHANAN, *Chairman*

The Honourable Senators

Bishop  
Bouchard  
Buchanan  
Crerar  
Daigle  
Davies  
Dennis  
• Donnelly

Duffus  
Dupuis  
DuTremblay  
Foster  
Gershaw  
Green  
Horner  
McDonald (*Kings*)

McGeer  
McLean  
Murdock  
Paquet  
Pirie  
Robinson  
Roebuck  
St-Père (24)



## REPORT

THURSDAY, 15th August, 1946.

The Standing Committee on Tourist Traffic beg leave to make their second Report, as follows:—

1. Your Committee have in obedience to the Order of Reference of the 10th May, 1946, inquired into the activities of the various agencies concerned with tourist travel.

2. In the course of its inquiry the Committee heard the following witnesses:

Mr. D. Leo Dolan, Chief of Canadian Travel Bureau, Department of Trade and Commerce;

Mr. R. A. Gibson, Director, Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, Department of Mines and Resources;

Dr. H. F. Lewis, Superintendent, Wild Life Protection, National Parks Bureau;

Mr. James Smart, Controller, National Parks Bureau;

Mr. R. J. C. Stead, Superintendent of Publicity and Information, National Parks Bureau;

Mr. C. K. LeCapelain, Inspector, National Parks Bureau;

Mr. W. S. Thompson, Director of Public Relations, Canadian National Railways and Trans-Canada Airlines;

Mr. A. A. Gardiner, General Passenger Traffic Manager, Canadian National Railways;

Mr. L. Coulter, an Alderman of the City of Ottawa;

Mr. J. H. Campbell, Manager of the Department of Public Relations, Canadian Pacific Railway Company;

Mr. R. G. Perry, General Traffic Manager, Colonial Coach Lines;

Mr. F. E. Bronson, Chairman, Federal District Commission;

Mr. R. P. Sparks, Ottawa, Ontario, President, Federal Woodlands Preservation League;

Mr. L. H. Phinney, A Special Commissioner for Defence Projects in North-west Canada, Edmonton, Alberta;

Colonel F. C. Hanington, Special Commissioner's Office, Edmonton, Alberta;

Mr. J. A. Christiansen, Chairman, Committee on Alaska Highway, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce;

The Hon. W. A. Fallow, Minister of Public Works, Province of Alberta;

Mr. Harry Ainlay, Mayor of the City of Edmonton, Alberta.

It may be recalled that in 1934 a special Committee of the Senate was appointed to consider the possibilities for tourist traffic and to enquire as to the means adopted by the Government looking to its encouragement and expansion. This special Committee made an exhaustive study of the subject and in its final report brought forward a number of recommendations which were adopted by the Government.

These recommendations might well be mentioned at this time:

1. That the tourist trade of Canada is a matter of National as well as provincial, municipal and private concern.



2. That the tourist trade of Canada is capable of great expansion.
3. That an aggressive campaign of tourist trade promotion should be launched at once as a national effort and in co-operation with tourist travel and publicity agencies, public and private throughout the Dominion.
4. That a "Canadian Travel Bureau" be established as a branch of the appropriate Department of the Dominion Government; such Bureau to have a Director at its head, and he be assisted by an Advisory Council consisting of the Directors of Information of the various Provincial Governments, representatives of the Federal Departments and Services interested in tourist travel promotion, and the members of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Association of Tourist and Publicity Bureaus.
5. That a sum of not less than \$150,000 be voted at the present session of Parliament to finance this campaign during the current fiscal year.
6. That a permanent progressive program of Canadian tourist travel promotion be launched, with the closest co-operation between all agencies engaged in this work, the Dominion's share in effort and expenditure to co-ordinate and supplement the work already undertaken and proposed by all other agencies, and in no manner to supplant this work or the organizations engaged therein.
7. That a Standing Committee of this House (representatives of all the Provinces) be set up, to bring Parliament into direct and permanent contact with this important national matter, to conduct an annual study of the tourist trade, and to consider means through which it may best be fostered and encouraged.
8. That the Canadian system of National Parks be extended, as a truly national policy, to embrace all the provinces; and that greater efforts be put forth to attract visitors to these scenic and recreational centres.

For the first time since your Senate Committee on tourist traffic was created following the adoption of the 1934 report, hearings have been held during which it was possible from the evidence heard to ascertain to what extent the recommendations of the special Committee of 1934 have been carried out. Your Committee found that they had been generally fulfilled.

The Canadian Travel Bureau was established and is now a Branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce. It has a Director at its head and an advisory council constituted as was proposed by the special Committee.

The first appropriation to the Bureau made in 1934 amounted to \$100,000.00. For the present fiscal year the Federal appropriation to assist in promoting tourist business is \$650,000.00. During the war years the activities of the Bureau were curtailed. The staff was cut to a minimum and the appropriation dropped to as low as \$27,000.00.

The Bureau has worked in the closest possible co-operation with not only the Tourist Agencies in Canada but with an ever-increasing number of tourist organizations in the United States and in some other parts of the world. Canadian Trade Commissioners' offices and Embassies in foreign lands have been used to spread tourist information.

The recommendation of the 1934 special Committee that the Canadian system of National Parks be extended to embrace all the provinces has been largely fulfilled. The National Parks system has been extended, particularly in the Maritime Provinces.

Your Committee learned from the evidence that was given to it by the Director that this year the National Travel Bureau was devoting most of its publicity to a campaign in the Canadian newspapers towards developing friendly and courteous treatment of tourists. The limited publicity in the United States had as its major purpose the stressing of the importance of making reservations well in advance before starting out on a holiday trip to Canada.



Canada's attractions as a holiday playground summer and winter are well and widely advertised. This opinion was reached after having had revealed to the Committee the extent of the campaigns of the transportation interests, the Provincial Governments, Municipalities, the Parks Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources and the Canadian Travel Bureau. The Committee found that the publicity sponsored by the Canadian Travel Bureau is aimed to give an overall picture of Canada's attractions, while those of the other interests are concentrated on particular areas such as the mountains, sea-side and other resorts served by the railways and steamship companies, while the Provinces and Municipalities confine their publicity and expenditures to their own particular appeal to tourists.

The Canadian Travel Bureau does not confine its publicity to the magazines and newspapers and the issue of pamphlets. It uses films and other means, such as displays at exhibitions to make all of Canada better known to the travelling public.

Your Committee is satisfied that the Bureau is encouraging and bringing about co-operation between the Provincial Governments and all agencies interested in the advancement of the Tourist Industry. There was no evidence of needless overlapping.

Your Committee was much impressed with the submissions from the officials of the Parks Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources. There is no question that Canada's National Parks are magnets drawing more and more visitors into the country every year. Not only is this so with the older Parks but also those of more recent creation. During the period of the war the parks appropriation was barely sufficient to meet the requirements for maintenance. Naturally there will be need for increased expenditure to bring these resorts up to standard conditions as well as to provide necessary improvements. It was made clear to the Committee that more accommodation for motor tourists was necessary in most of the Parks, and a continued addition of cabins to meet the requirements of the tourists travelling by automobile seems to your Committee to be necessary.

It was suggested also that Parks might be established in parts of the Dominion where they do not now exist. A delegation appeared before the Committee to urge the acquirement of more land to be added to what was come to be known as the Gatineau Park close to the Capital of Canada. The Committee was impressed with the case presented, particularly the view that if additional land was to be acquired it should be done now before allowing it to pass into the possession of private parties. It was argued that this park in its close proximity to the Capital, would do much to increase the tourist flow from the United States.

Evidence was tendered to your Committee in support of the view that the Alaska Highway had considerable potential possibilities for tourist traffic. The fame that it had gained in the war years, the hitherto largely unknown country it had opened up, its link with Alaska and the Yukon led the advocates of the continued maintenance of this highway and the construction of a shorter road from Edmonton to Dawson Creek to urge that the Federal Government should keep the road open for tourist traffic and assist in the construction of the proposed cut-off from Edmonton via White Court to the British Columbia boundary at Dawson Creek. This would reduce the mileage between Edmonton and Dawson Creek by 135 miles.

The view was expressed to the Committee that the so-called Haines cut-off running from the head of the Lynn Canal to the Alaska Highway near the Yukon boundary should be brought up to the standard of the main Alaska highway. The Committee was informed that the Alaska Highway as it exists today was built entirely at the expense of the United States and has been turned over free of cost to Canada.



Evidence of officers of the Federal Government established that the highway was to be kept in operation and that services for the convenience of travellers were already being provided at different points along its route.

Almost every witness appearing before your Committee stressed the need of better roads if tourist traffic was to expand. The prevailing opinion was that Canada had unlimited tourist attractions. To make them accessible, all-weather highways were necessary and Federal assistance would be required to assist in the provision of the main arteries of approach, particularly from the United States.

Your Committee is convinced that a broadly planned tourist traffic policy has almost unlimited possibilities. One witness pointed out that United States citizens spend six billion dollars annually in tourist travel and estimated that at least one-tenth of this amount was available to Canada. This sum of six hundred million dollars was in accord with other opinions offered to the Committee during its hearings.

If this estimate is correct, or nearly so, then no other conclusion can be reached than that wisely appropriated expenditures on the promotion of tourist travel will bring a return greater than any branch of our export trade.

Your Committee recommends.

1. Since the greater part of our tourist traffic from the United States comes to Canada by motor car, good hard surfaced roads, from United States border points, strategically located, are a prime necessity to its expansion. Your Committee recommends to the Dominion Government that financial assistance, under proper agreements, should be offered to the Provinces, who have the personnel in their Highway Departments to supervise the construction and maintenance of such roads, and that these roads should be built to a permanent high standard.

2. That facilities in National Parks should be improved, and roads within the Parks hard surfaced to a permanent high standard.

3. That by whatever suitable agencies are available, Canadians operating service stations, eating and stopping places, and including hotels, shops and stores, should be impressed with the importance of showing courtesy and giving good service to visiting tourists at all times.

4. Suitable descriptive literature and good road maps for the different provinces should be placed in the hands of all Immigration and Customs officers at all border crossing points, to be made available to tourists seeking such information.

6. That the development and permanent maintenance of our Tourist business should be planned on a long range view.

6. That there should be as close co-ordination as possible of the efforts of the Federal and Provincial Agencies and the Transportation Companies by land, water and air, to prevent overlapping and get the maximum results possible for the money expended.

7. That enquiry should be made by the Federal Government into the possibilities of the Alaska Highway as a tourist attraction to ascertain whether expenditure on a more direct link with it from Edmonton to Dawson Creek would be justified.

8. That authority be granted for the printing of 600 copies in English and 200 copies in French of this report and the evidence submitted to the Committee on August 8, 1946, with respect to the tourist possibilities of the Alaska Highway, and that Rule 100 be suspended insofar as it relates to the said printing.

Due to a lack of shorthand reporters it was not possible for the reporting branch to furnish a complete report of the proceedings to the Committee.

All which is respectfully submitted.

W. A. BUCHANAN,  
*Chairman.*



## APPENDIX

### MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

THE SENATE,

OTTAWA, Thursday, August 8, 1946.

The Standing Committee on Tourist Traffic, which was authorized to inquire into the tourist business and into the activities of the various provincial and other agencies concerned with tourist travel, resumed this day at 10.30 a.m.

Hon. Mr. Buchanan in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I might explain that the purpose of this meeting is to obtain information about the Alaska Highway and ascertain whether it has any future possibilities in connection with tourist traffic. We have with us Mr. Phinney and other officials of the Federal Government, the Hon. Mr. Fallow, Minister of Public Works for Alberta, Mayor Ainlay of Edmonton and Mr. Christiansen, representing the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. I would suggest that we call first on Mr. Phinney, who is a Special Commissioner for Defence Projects, located at Edmonton, and a member of the Privy Council secretariat. Mr. Phinney, have you a brief?

#### **Mr. L. H. Phinney, Special Commissioner for Defence Projects.**

We have prepared notes on the highway, sir. We were not quite clear as to just what information you would require, and we prepared a memorandum showing some of the background of the construction of the road, the standard of maintenance, the type of road which has been built, and so on, and have given in an appendix taken from one of the reports that are sent in monthly from the office there a statistical summary of facilities either now in existence or planned for construction during the coming summer. We also included in it an estimate of the cost of putting the Haines cut-off in good repair. That is a subject which is of considerable interest at the present time both to the American government and I think to the Yukon Administration. I thought it might be of interest and relevant to your present discussions.

The studies which we have made of the Alaska Highway fall pretty well into two categories. One, which was made during the war period, is the possible military value of the road and its potential in case of strategic necessity. More recently we have been concentrating on the tourist angle and the possible value of the road as a medium for opening up the natural resources of the area. The development has hardly gone far enough for anybody to express a firm opinion on the value of the highway and its ultimate use, but to a person brought up on the prairies I have found the highway throughout its length is very interesting. It has a colourful background and a dramatic appeal which I think will draw to it a very fair percentage of the American tourist traffic coming to Canada. Quite obviously it will not be the tourist traffic which plans on a two-week vacation. We find that at the present time the people who desire to go over the route usually are equipped for a two- or three-month trip, and want to get out of their system the desire for travel which has been stayed during the war years. A large number of Americans who have been held back from travel would like to make a long trip into new territory, and the Alaska Highway offers that



opportunity. The main problem, I think, will be to establish satisfactory access roads so that the traffic can get at the highway without too much difficulty. That I think is under careful consideration by both the province of British Columbia and the province of Alberta, which have indicated a very friendly attitude towards the opening up of the northwest sections of Canada.

This year traffic has of necessity been limited to people who have been moving to Alaska or northwest Canada on business. We find that a considerable number of Americans who wish to go to Alaska consider coastal shipping inadequate and use either bus service on the highway or their own motor transport to get through to the northern section. The traffic during the past month has been responsible for moving about one thousand Americans from Dawson Creek to Alaska. The actual number of cars would be about one for every three people. Due to the lack of facilities on the highway it has been necessary to strictly limit the traffic to the people who have good equipment and can look after their own accommodation requirements along the route. On checking the tabulation at the back of the notes on the highway you will find that there are now established or about to be established very shortly filling stations at about 200-mile intervals. The filling station attendants serve light meals and are setting up emergency accommodation which will be ready by the end of August. This will make possible a little more leniency in the issuing of permits, and I think we can look forward to the traffic building up steadily during the fall of the year. By next spring there will probably be sufficient accommodation to handle not only business travellers but a fair percentage of any tourist traffic that is offered.

I feel that you may perhaps be interested in the potential use of the highway for the development of natural resources, although I suppose, sir, that is not the subject of your study at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we would be glad to hear your views on that.

Mr. PHINNEY: We find that in the first two hundred miles of the highway after leaving Fort St. John there is a fair stand of timber. That is now under development by one small company and several small B.C. logging companies wish to move in there and start logging operations to meet the needs of the large agricultural settlement in the Peace River block. There is perhaps a pious wish that the agricultural development in the Peace River block will extend north. Studies have, I believe, been made of the agricultural potential there, and the indications are that there is good agricultural land as far north as Fort Nelson, with possible pockets of agricultural land as far north as Liard river. The indications are therefore that we would have in the first three hundred miles of the highway logging and lumbering operations and eventually a fairly substantial population to be served by that section of the highway.

From Fort Nelson on you begin to get into the more picturesque section of the country and pass into the mountain area. The province of British Columbia plans to set up a provincial park, which will include a section of the Rocky mountains, at Muncho lake—a very lovely part of the highway—where there is a fine stock of big game of all sorts, and in which is located the hot springs. From there on you begin to tap the Yukon Territory, and again you pass through mountain country that is very attractive and quite picturesque. There are a series of lovely lakes with good fishing from Watson lake through to Whitehorse. The actual potential in the Yukon is so well known that it is not necessary to go into it here.

The Yukon has, I suppose, as good fishing and game hunting as any section of Canada. It is now accessible and will, I think, attract a very substantial tourist traffic. Again, it will be a specialized type of traffic, because of the distances to be covered and the cost of moving into the territory.

Altogether I think the Alaska highway should have a reasonably bright future. It will open up new natural resources for exploitation, both mineral



and tourist, and enable tourists to take advantage of a section of Canada which is picturesque from the point of view of scenery, has an attractive historical background, and will provide game and fishing in almost unlimited degree.

The present standards of maintenance carried out by the Canadian army are designed to be the equal of those followed by the American maintenance organization, and they also plan a considerable capital outlay to improve grades and the general standard of the highway. The work they have done so far has maintained the surfaces in good shape and is tending to improve the standards generally for the travelling public.

If there are any questions that I can answer I shall be glad to do so.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: On the map behind you, could you show us with a pointer where Edmonton is and where the road goes?

Mr. PHINNEY: Edmonton lies here. The road follows a rather circuitous route around the height of land lying in here, up this way past Lesser Slave lake and over to Grande Prairie and on to Dawson Creek, Dawson Creek being the rail head.

The problem regarding access roads has to be considered. The one getting traffic from Edmonton to Dawson Creek—

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: How far?

Mr. PHINNEY: The distance is about 430 miles. From Prince George to Dawson Creek the British Columbia government is, as I have no doubt you are aware, building at the present time an access road known as the Pine Pass highway.

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: How far is that from Edmonton?

Mr. PHINNEY: About two hundred miles. I believe it is to be opened in 1948.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: What distance will that road be from Prince George to Dawson Creek?

Mr. PHINNEY: About two hundred miles. Incidentally, the construction of the Pine Pass highway may meet the requirements of traffic coming up from the west coast, at least for the time being. I believe the British Columbia government is interested in a further program of road construction, but should that not materialize the Pine Pass highway will give access to the present Alaska highway via the Cariboo highway from Prince George to Dawson Creek. From Dawson Creek the road passes up this way. Incidentally, sir, I may say that I have brought a series of maps which give a very clear picture of this area.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: We can follow the highway better on the wall map that you are now using.

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes. The road runs to Fort St. John. From there it taps an agricultural area and is used very largely by the farmers and other residents in the district.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: The Peace river is between Dawson Creek and Fort St. John.

Mr. PHINNEY: You pass over the Peace by the big suspension bridge which the Americans dedicated at this point about two years ago. You pass Fort St. John and reach the height of land, crossing over the head waters of these very small rivers, such as the Sikanni Chief river and the Prophet river. You follow down the Prophet river to Fort Nelson. That makes it possible to service the main air field at Fort Nelson, and should the farm potential ever be developed there it would open the farm lands which lie between that and the Liard river. The road then cuts back almost due west along the Muskwa river and into the tail end of the Rocky mountains, swings north along past



Muncho lake and cuts into the Liard river. It does not show here. Then it runs along the Liard river to Lower Post and Watson lake—that being just about there—where there is another main air post.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: That is about the boundary between British Columbia and the Yukon.

Mr. PHINNEY: It is just over the boundary in the Yukon. Lower Post is in British Columbia, and then twenty miles further you come to Watson lake and you are in the Yukon. Then it cuts north to Teslin lake, where there is an intermediate landing strip. One of the older Yukon post settlements is there.

In passing through this section the road opens up interesting mineral possibilities. I understand there is a sizable deposit just east of Muncho lake which is under investigation at the present time, and the indications suggest the possibility of it being developed into a mine, although it is still very much in the prospecting stage.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Gold or base metal?

Mr. PHINNEY: It is a composite ore, gold and some copper. There is a well defined wide band of mineralization.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Is that in the Yukon?

Mr. PHINNEY: No, that is in British Columbia, just before the road reaches Muncho lake.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Then the road goes on from Watson lake to White Horse?

Mr. PHINNEY: From Watson lake, via Teslin lake to Whitehorse. From there on the road passes north over what were old trails, which have been improved and re-located. It passes through Champagne and Kusawa lake to the border at mile 1221.6, I think it is. I understand the Federal government is planing to set aside a section of the Elias mountain range here, which would include Kusawa lake as a national park. It is perhaps our most spectacular mountain range section. You have in there Mount Logan, very close to twenty thousand feet high, and many other interesting peaks, with enormous ice fields and also very interesting mineral possibilities.

The Haines cut-off, which starts from a point in the Lynn canal here, about twenty miles from Skagway, was designed to give an added supply route to Alaska, and runs about a hundred and fifty-four miles from the town of Haines up to about Mile 100 on the Alaska highway. There again you open up an interesting mountain section. It also taps the small section of British Columbia. Here is a very useful stand of timber, which will enable the Yukon Territories to get lumber and bridging material at a reasonable figure.

Hon. Mr. DAIGLE: What is the quantity of timber available in the vicinity of the highway?

Mr. PHINNEY: Do you mean the entire length?

Hon. Mr. DAIGLE: In the sections where there is timber.

Mr. PHINNEY: I do not think there has been a detailed study made of that. The British Columbia forestry officials are entering into their section of the highway, and we have discussed with them the setting up of logging operations there, but I do not think there has been any detailed timber cruise carried out; in fact, I am quite sure that there has not been.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: That is right.

Mr. PHINNEY: Here in this British Columbia section you are in a type of country where you get coastal stands, that is, you get the same type of timber as you would all down the coast as far almost as Vancouver Island.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: You are speaking of those close to the highway.



Mr. PHINNEY: The first twenty or thirty miles of the Haines cut-off runs through a stand of very fine timber.

Hon. Mr. DAIGLE: It contains B.C. fir and sitka spruce.

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes, timber of that type. The commander of the highway system looks forward to drawing fairly heavily on that timber for the building of bridges and piling, and that sort of thing. This timber is practically unobtainable in the Yukon, because it is a plateau and has a much lighter type of timber and the stands are inadequate, except for pit props and small logs for building.

The Haines cut-off is the road which is receiving some attention at the present time. At the time the army took over the highway little was known of the Haines cut-off because it had been out of use for the better part of a year; it is subject to a very heavy fall of snow and as a result it was impossible for our engineers to examine the road, and we were led to believe that it was constructed on the same standards as the Alaska Highway. This was found not to be the case. It was a pioneer road with little ditching and poor bridges, and some sections were obviously constructed on a temporary basis. As a result it had suffered seriously from slides, floods and erosion generally. I believe the United States authorities are anxious that the Haines cut-off be made available for traffic into Alaska. It opens up a very attractive area, and in one section it taps a placer district in the Yukon, which has been almost inaccessible for many years, and is now under active development with very encouraging results. There is excellent shooting and fishing along there, and it would assure a circle tour for people coming there without going through Alaska. For instance, a Canadian could come up the Alaska Highway to Whitehorse, continue on the Haines cut-off, and cut back to Haines and go south by boat if he did not wish to go to Alaska proper.

Some residents on the Alaska Panhandle have cars, and are very anxious to have the Haines cut-off maintained so that they can get through to the Alaska Highway, down through Canada and then to the States. In discussing the matter of the use of the Alaska Highway with residents of Alaska who have passed through our office, they are very enthusiastic about its maintenance, and talk of using it to the full. They have suffered for many years from lack of adequate transportation, and feel that it will be some years before boat traffic is adequate for the needs of the territory. We will have from Alaska very substantial traffic, and there are a number of American trucking companies who have proposed to truck supplies from the States through to Alaska by the Alaska Highway.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: What is the population of Alaska, Mr. Phinney?

Mr. PHINNEY: I do not know what the population is.

Hon. Mr. DAIGLE: Do many people live on that Haines cut-off?

Mr. PHINNEY: Just at Tidewater Inn; there is the small town of Haines with about three hundred population.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Are there any agricultural possibilities along the Haines cut-off?

Mr. PHINNEY: I would not think so. It comes up very rapidly from a coastal area similar to Vancouver Island, but is a little colder. It rises very rapidly to 3,000 feet, and then goes into a gravel flood plain valley with little alluvial soil. As one gets closer to the Alaska Highway there are some sedimentary benches that may be worked; but on the whole the agricultural potentialities of the Yukon will require very careful study by the Department of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: I think that is a very moderate statement.

Mr. PHINNEY: I believe there is an experimental farm up there that is doing very useful work. They grow wonderful vegetables in certain sections, and



some of the local residents of long standing in the Yukon say that they could produce sufficient vegetables and similar produce to meet the needs of the territory if the freight rates on the Lewes River were lowered. At the present time the produce which is grown close to Dawson City, where the best agricultural land is found, cannot be brought up the Lewes River to Whitehorse in competition with the produce brought in from Vancouver Island over the White Pass and Yukon Railway.

Hon. Mr. DUFFUS: Where is that farm located?

Colonel HANINGTON: It is about a hundred miles out of Whitehorse at the junction of the Haines Road, about two miles from where the Haines Road comes into Alaska Highway.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: That heavy blue line shown on the map indicates the boundary between Alaska and the Yukon?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes sir, and of course the Panhandle runs down here. Incidentally, I was discussing this area with the Deputy Minister for the Department of Mines of British Columbia, and he said that studies of the mining potentiality here indicated that it was one of the richest areas in the province of British Columbia, and they hoped for mining development in that section now that there is access to it.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that what you call the Atlin area?

Mr. PHINNEY: No, that is not the Atlin area. This is an entirely new area which has never been accessible because of the extremely rough country and heavy timber. The people of the Yukon tell me that all along the Dezadeash River which parallels the Haines cut-off, one can make good money panning in any of the streams there.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: If that mining area is developed would it be serviced from the coast?

Mr. PHINNEY: It would be the most logical way of servicing it, because it is within forty miles of a good harbour. They need a better dock at Haines but I believe that is planned, and the Haines cut-off on the American side, from Haines to about Mile 42, has been constructed to a very high standard. It is a first-class gravel road, with the exception of about two miles which were washed out this spring by the Chilkat River. It is a very good road right up to the border and, unfortunately for us, just at the border you go into mountain terrain and on to a road which is purely a pioneer road and needs a great deal of work done on it before it is in good shape.

Incidentally, gentlemen, I have included in my memorandum an estimate of the cost of putting the Haines cut-off in condition. That was supplied by the Commander of the Northwest Highway System and I thought it might be of interest to you.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: It was really a military consideration that led to the building of Haines cut-off?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes, purely a military consideration, and I think the Americans recognize it; but we have from the residents of this area and the people up at Fairbanks constant pressure to keep the Haines cut-off open if possible throughout the year, but at least during the summer months. The consensus of opinion regarding the winter maintenance of the Haines cut-off is that it will be impossible to keep it open at the cost which would warrant the expenditure. It is subject to very heavy coastal precipitation, and gets immense drifts of snow which tend to compact and freeze. In keeping with other access roads to the Alaska Highway it will be very difficult to keep it open during the winter. I do not think it would warrant the expenditure until the Yukon has developed considerably.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: How many months of the year do these difficult conditions prevail?



Mr. PHINNEY: The present indications are that the roads can be kept open from the 1st of June until the 15th of October, and no longer.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Has any estimate been made, Mr. Phinney, of the cost of maintaining the Alaskan Highway from Dawson Creek to the Alaska boundary?

Mr. PHINNEY: I do not think it has been broken down on that basis. We have a number of rough calculations made on a mileage basis, which might apply, but they vary a great deal with the systems on which they are worked out.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: The army has taken over the maintenance of the road as I understand it?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: It will have some estimate as to the cost. From my limited knowledge of the project there are two essential features: certain capital expenditures are necessary if it is to be a permanent highway. Many of the bridges put in by the United States authorities were of a temporary nature.

Mr. PHINNEY: Very much so.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: And I understand that there are some places where diversions will have to be made in the road?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: That would be a capital expenditure, but aside from that there is the maintenance of keeping the necessary amount of gravel on the road, dragging it and so on. I was anxious to get, if possible, an estimate of the cost of doing that work.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: I have seen those figures some place; they are available.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you not shown some figures in your statement here, Mr. Phinney?

Mr. PHINNEY: That is the Haines cut-off only.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: I am not speaking of the Haines cut-off.

Colonel HANINGTON: The cost runs somewhere around \$1,000,000 a year. General Foster figures from the American data that once the betterment program of which you spoke is carried out, one could hope to maintain it below \$1,000,000 a year for the whole 1,200 miles.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Would some of the cost be recoverable through leases and other sources of revenue?

Mr. PHINNEY: I have never heard any suggestions along those lines. The question has been raised as to whether it should be run as a toll road. It came more as an inquiry from the United States; however, I think the chief source of revenue will be derived indirectly from the sale of gasoline and similar sources of revenue.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Who gives permission for the establishment of business along the highway?

Mr. PHINNEY: The Yukon territory itself. It is handled by the Department of Mines and Resources (Yukon Administration). Incidentally, the military restrictions in the Yukon have been rescinded and we have proposed to the British Columbia government that they consider removing restrictions as early as possible, and that they also accept the normal responsibility of a provincial government in the area through which the highway runs. They are prepared to assist in setting up tourist facilities as soon as the survey of the highway has been completed and they can then make arrangements to dispose of the land adjacent to it. At the present time you could not sell a piece of land because it cannot be tied on to anything.



Hon. Mr. CRERAR: What is the distance from Edmonton to Dawson? You gave it a moment ago.

Mr. PHINNEY: About 430 miles.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: You mentioned the hot springs. At what point on the highway and how near the present highway are those springs located?

Mr. PHINNEY: There are a number of springs in the vicinity of the Liard River, at the junction of the Trout River and the Liard. The hot springs which are most readily accessible are close to the first crossing of the Liard River, within about two miles of that point.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: That is the famous Paradise Valley?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes, the legendary Paradise Valley, a tropical valley.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: It is quite close to the road?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes, within a very short distance of the road.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: About half a mile, as I recall.

The CHAIRMAN: Apart from considerations of tourist traffic, is it the intention to maintain the highway?

Mr. PHINNEY: In all discussions it has been understood that the highway should be maintained not only for tourist traffic but to enable the development of natural resources in the area, and also to provide a strategic route into north-west Canada and provide an access route to Alaska for the American forces, should they wish to use it.

Hon. Mr. DAIGLE: Am I right in saying that the section richest in mines and timber is close to the border of British Columbia?

Mr. PHINNEY: Present studies would indicate that there is a variety of potential. Studies are being made of a section of the highway from Fort St. John to Muncho lake to see if there is an oil potential there. Indications are that there may be a very good oil formation in the first 300 or 400 miles of the highway. There are also indications of fairly large coal deposits. Passing out of the sedimentary rocks, as you pass through the Rocky Mountains at Muncho lake, you begin to get into good mining country. It was thought that nothing of real interest would be found until you got into the Yukon, but the explorations and prospecting that have been carried out in the past have produced interesting results. There is one very interesting looking property close to Muncho lake. And of course the Liard river section has for many years been a good placer area. There are several proposals before the B.C. government that large placer dredging operations be carried out along the Liard river. And even inaccessible as it was in the old days, it has always been possible to pan enough gold to make a fair stake on any of the bars on the Liard river.

As you pass on between Watson lake and Whitehorse, the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting have quite an interesting property about half way between those points. They have been carrying on intensive studies for at least a year. As you pass north of Whitehorse you get into another type of mineralized area with interesting placer deposits, and close to Kluane lake there is quite extensive prospecting going on at the present time for both copper and gold, as well as of course the old-fashioned placer operations, which are coming back into vogue now, with the bulldozer moving the gravel into the flumes.

Hon. Mr. DAIGLE: My point is that if the richest mineral area is closer to British Columbia, would it not be cheaper to have a highway in order to get access to this section from British Columbia?

Mr. PHINNEY: Your difficulty there, I think, would be the engineering problem of carrying the highway over a series of fairly rugged mountain ranges where there is very heavy precipitation. I am not fully aware of the studies that have been carried out, but I flew there for a number of years and I



know that in winter there is a very heavy snow-fall, while farther east the snow-fall is relatively light. I believe the Department of Mines and Resources is planning at the present time an access road from Yukon down to Dease lake, to open up a section of northern British Columbia where there are excellent mining possibilities. The Deputy Minister of Mines for British Columbia expressed the opinion that the best area from their point of view, aside from this small section along the Hanes cut-off, was the McDame Creek area.

HON. MR. HORNER: In the Alaska Highway generally there would be very little difficulty with snow.

MR. PHINNEY: There is only one section where they ever have to use rotaries, and that is up towards the north end. The rest will just snow-plough off. They have just about two feet of snow-fall in winter, just as on the prairies.

HON. MR. HORNER: And some years not that much.

MR. PHINNEY: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: So long as the road is under defence control, will the permit system be imposed for private travel over the road?

MR. PHINNEY: I would like to think that as soon as there are adequate facilities to look after the travelling public all control could be removed. I believe it has been suggested that due to the possibilities of flash flooding and washing out of bridges, and the danger in winter of a man getting snowed in by a blizzard, it would be well to have a modified control similar to that maintained in the parks, where they check a man through, not to question his right to go through but just to make sure that he does not get into trouble somewhere and suffer because of being unable to get help soon enough.

THE CHAIRMAN: Our principal interest is in the amount of traffic that would pass over the highway during what is ordinary called the summer months, and in the question of whether there would be facilities along the highway to look after needs of tourists. You spoke of an oil station at every 200 miles?

MR. PHINNEY: Yes. At the present time the gasoline facilities will provide for a station at least every 200 miles, and in some cases at closer intervals than that. By this fall these stations will be available.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you granting concessions to private individuals or have you a set-up of your own?

MR. PHINNEY: At present there is a rather hybrid arrangement, arising out of the needs of the maintenance organization. They have contracts with supply agents, and in order to cut down the cost of maintenance they have arranged with the supply agents to take over the refueling facilities at their maintenance camps and operate them on behalf of the maintenance organization, and it has been agreed that the oil company can supply itinerant traffic at the same time. The refueling facilities on the highway are really operated for the highway organization, with the proviso that they can serve the travelling public, whenever they require to call on them. In British Columbia it will be for the provincial government to decide who shall have rights to set up refueling stations on the highway, if the present plans go through. In the Yukon, the Yukon Administration will, I presume, decide who shall have the right to set up stations. British Columbia officials assured me that their attitude was to let competition look after itself, and that anybody who wanted to set up a filling station was welcome to do so, provided it was properly handled. Their chief interest was in seeing that the stations were not a source of fire hazard in forested areas. The Imperial Oil Company, which services the south half of the highway, has never suggested that it wanted exclusive privileges. The company is quite prepared to meet competition. In the Yukon at present the British Yukon Navigation Company



is the chief supply agent. The Imperial Oil is interested in getting in there but cannot bring in petroleum products in competition with the British Yukon Navigation Company.

The CHAIRMAN: How long does it take an automobile to travel over the highway from the last well-settled point, Dawson Creek, through to Whitehorse?

Mr. PHINNEY: Three days would get you through from Dawson Creek to Whitehorse without any difficulty at all.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: The distance is 918 miles?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What are the present stop-over facilities between Dawson Creek, say, and Whitehorse?

Mr. PHINNEY: They are very rudimentary, and for that reason we have had to limit traffic to people prepared to look after themselves in any emergency. There is a hotel at Fort St. John, and between Fort St. John and Fort Nelson there are two stopping stations run by a trader who happened to be located there at the time the highway was constructed through and was allowed to remain. One is called Tucker's Inn and the other is called Lum & Abner. They are shown on the mileage charts. At Fort Nelson the Imperial Oil agent has been permitted to use three abandoned buildings to set up temporary accommodation there. The same is true at Muncho Lake and at Watson Lake. The accommodation is very limited, there is no doubt about that.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you know of any inquiries being made by people who would be interested in providing facilities along the highway if tourists were allowed to move freely?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes, there are a number of inquiries. The British Yukon Navigation Company, which operates a bus line between Whitehorse and Dawson Creek, is building four stopping places. Those will be completed by this fall and will provide accommodation at about 200-mile intervals between Dawson Creek and Whitehorse.

Then there are these Imperial Oil agents who have set up temporary accommodation, and we have a number of applications for permission to take over abandoned camps. I do not like the word "abandoned" because it gives the impression that the camps are of no value. They are contractors' camps which were transferred to Canada without cost, so that materials could be made readily available to people wishing to enter the district to develop it. I think they will form the nucleus of tourist centres, tourist camps and stopping places generally along the highway. It can be done quickly, for the buildings are there and just need to be fixed up and equipped. But in British Columbia the provincial government will not permit civilian development until the present restrictions are rescinded. Because of that we have been trying to finalize that phase of our negotiations with the British Columbia authorities. As soon as that is done we are setting up a disposal chain by which war assets can be quickly transferred to people who wish to buy them for camps and buildings to develop the highway. As soon as the British Columbia government takes its check off, these buildings can be disposed of and the purchasers can set up business on the highway.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Is the refinery at Whitehorse still operating?

Mr. PHINNEY: No sir, it has been closed down for some considerable time. The Canal project, of which it is part, is the subject of a special agreement between Canada and the United States, and in closing down the Canal project the American forces left it almost one hundred per cent efficient. They took out very little in the way of equipment, and if you go into any of their pumping stations there is everything there complete, including dishes and all the



necessaries to set up shop the minute they dispose of that as a going concern. So you will find the refinery, in theory, at least, one hundred per cent efficient and ready to turn over at a moment's notice. But it is not now in operation.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Are the American drilling parties still at Norman Wells? I think that was taken over by Imperial Oil.

Mr. PHINNEY: There was a provision in the agreement whereby Americans could transfer to Imperial Oil three million dollars worth of drilling equipment; which they did.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Is anything being done to maintain the pipe line between Norman Wells and Whitehorse?

Mr. PHINNEY: No, it is completely cut off. The access road is closed and is only used by one supply agent, who goes through as far as Ross Post. He gets permission to go through from the R.C.M.P. and fixes up any washouts himself. Otherwise the access road and pipe line have been demobilized and are not now under maintenance.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: What is the general state of the road as it now exists?

Mr. PHINNEY: It is an excellent gravel highway, with some sections a little run down and requiring regravelling. A few bridges which had been constructed at points where they expected to divert the road were put in in temporary form and will have to be replaced; but on the whole it is a road you can drive on very well with ease and comfort. It is as good as any road in western Canada, I think.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: The highway or road for servicing the pipe line has been travelled?

Mr. PHINNEY: Yes.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: What kind of territory does that road pass through? Is there any timber there?

Mr. PHINNEY: There is a small stand of timber in one or two places, but it is mostly mountain and muskeg.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Any mineral possibilities?

Mr. PHINNEY: I believe so. Recently they have carried out geological studies along the highway, and they tapped one or two very interesting sections; but of course it is practically unexplored country. Putting the road and the pipe line through was an extraordinary effort, it was very spectacular, but it has received very little publicity.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: But the pipe line could all be used again?

Mr. PHINNEY: Of course, it would need repairs, because in some sections it was simply laid down along the bed of the stream, and nobody knows what happened to that in the past year. It is badly damaged in those sections, but it could be repaired quite rapidly.

Colonel HANINGTON: Senator Crerar, the lowest American figure was just \$100,000 during their maintenance period. But any information there should be checked with our army records, because there is always a discussion of what "maintenance" means.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: I understand. Do you know what the Army estimates for this year?

Colonel HANINGTON: No sir, I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Christiansen, Chairman of the Alaska Highway Committee of the Edmonton Board of Trade is now ready to present his brief. He will be followed by Hon. W. A. Fallow, Minister of Public Works of Alberta. You may proceed, Mr. Christiansen.



**Mr. James A. Christiansen:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Honourable members of the Senate Tourist Traffic Committee, I should like first of all to commend Commissioner Phinney on his splendid report.

Some Hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: That was very sweet music to us westerners.

I am on a most important mission, to solicit the immediate assistance of our governing bodies at Ottawa. The existing Alaska Highway is no longer a question mark, but is a MUST on the agenda of the people of North America for their protection. That part of the accepted Highway which is the subject of my mission is vitally important "unfinished business".

Though the cost will be relatively small, it is the most important piece of highway construction confronting North America at this moment. The requirement is a modern, hard-surfaced highway from Edmonton to Dawson Creek, B.C., to complete the Alaska Highway link between Coutts, Alberta, on our southern international boundary and Fairbanks, Alaska.

I would like, on behalf of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, to convey to your Committee an expression of appreciation for the opportunity, the privilege and pleasure of placing before you its views on a matter of extreme importance to all Canadians.

It is in the capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Alaska Highway, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, that I appear before you now. I am not delegated to foster any selfish motives for the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce or any other body. Edmonton, because of its geographical position, is looked to by many parts of the West, and by other parts of Canada, for leadership on this subject. We Edmontonians willingly accept that challenge and responsibility and do so in the knowledge that our governments, provincial and federal, seek, and should have the support of public opinion. I am well-fortified today with such desire—a desire to co-operate to the end that some of our major national problems may attain a satisfactory solution.

The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce believes that in the efforts and recommendations of your Committee may well rest the solution to some of such major problems, one of which is certainly our unfavorable trade balance with the United States, our great neighbour to the South. The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce believes that an increase in tourist trade is the leading answer; that the beauty of our country, our fishing and hunting is one of the best exports we have to offer the United States and its travel-minded people. It is estimated that six billions of dollars were spent in the United States by tourists in 1940; that in the State of Michigan alone, home of the motor industry, the tourist trade stood second only to the motor industry in that year. If only a small percentage, say 10 per cent, of the American tourist trade could be diverted to Canada, which we feel can be done, our trade balance with that country would be placed in a favourable position. We want American tourists to come to Canada, but we must do something to induce them. Quoting my own experience—business takes me to many parts of the United States. Wherever I go there I am continually told by Americans that they want to visit Canada, every part of our country. Many wish to travel over the Alaska Highway, to visit our North Country and Alaska. We have much of tourist interest to offer them and many of them will eventually settle in our great Northwest.

For these and other reasons, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce believes that the Alaska Highway situation should be embraced by the efforts of your Committee.

The Alaska Highway was built by the United States at great cost—a great achievement, accomplished many years ahead of normal developments in that area. It has, so far, been invaluable in the building and maintaining of airports



along Canada's finest air route to the Orient and must, for that purpose if for no other, be retained. It is the answer, better than any other route could be, to the value and necessity of a land route to Alaska, capable of adequate military protection and all-year traffic usage—route free from mist and fog and easily kept open during winter seasons.

In the commercial aspect, this important Highway has also opened up the opportunity for large-scale developments in a comparatively untouched area of our great Northwest. It will now become an avenue of commerce destined to be of increasing importance in the coming years of peace for mail service, for telephone and telegraph communications,—for service to its thousand-and-one spots of scenic grandeur and potential post-war tourist trade.

There is a potential pulp and paper industry all over the Yukon. Let us give enterprise a chance to build it.

Some of the most magnificent wheat I have ever seen is growing to-day in the Montney and Blueberry areas, north of Fort St. John, not far from the highway. There are fertile valleys near Fort Nelson, capable of supporting perhaps as many as 250,000 families or more. That phase alone is of extreme importance. This area is a considerable distance, that is, some 300 to 400 miles north and west of Dawson Creek, British Columbia. The best inducement for such a prospective settlement is a capable outlet for the resultant production—keeping in mind that highways make our economies function. Without transportation, no nation or community can advance or even survive. It is the means by which we arrive where we want to go.

Little has been said about the great mineral wealth of that territory adjacent to the Alaska Highway. Much prospecting is now going on and with adequate transportation developments will proceed rapidly.

As much may be said for prospecting for oil farther west and north, which will be in close approach to the Alaska Highway, the extent of which is being explored by Dominion Government geological parties. The people of Alaska are highly in favour of the present established Alaska Highway and insist upon the same as a must. People throughout the Central and Eastern States are anxious to be able to travel to Alaska over this road. Chambers of Commerce from Montana to North Carolina and Texas have, and are still, supporting this very strongly. They ask: why not make use of the good highway we already have?

The major portion of the Alaska Highway (1,221.4 miles) lies within Canada, which, in accordance with agreement, was turned over to our Canadian Government within six months after termination of the war. As such, it is to all intents a gift to Canada by our neighbour. It would be folly to permit such a costly gift, with attendant splendid possibilities for suitable use, to get into disrepair. It will be Canada's obligation, not only to maintain this highway, but to improve it if and whenever such can be done. Canada has assumed this obligation and has, so far, done a good job.

However, assumption of this control and all its implications make it one of the most important pieces of unfinished business in our country because the Alaska Highway is of little or no value without proper and convenient approach to the same. Dawson Creek, British Columbia, is the start of the highway. Present approach to Dawson Creek and the Alaska Highway from Edmonton is via Athabasca, Smith, High Prairie, thence over the Sturgeon Lake trail back to Grande Prairie, thence northwest to Dawson Creek, a travelled distance of some 500 miles.

Present conditions demand a correction to this by construction of a direct and modern, hard-surfaced highway from Edmonton to Dawson Creek, British Columbia, a distance of approximately 300 air miles; completion of which would shorten the present travelled route by approximately 135 miles. It would close the gap between the Alaska Highway and Coutts, Alberta, a distance of 750



miles, of which the province of Alberta has already constructed, and will soon have hard-surfaced, approximately 450 miles, that is between Coutts, Alberta, and Edmonton.

With completion of the proposed Edmonton to Dawson Creek gap, there will be a hard-surfaced highway from Dawson Creek to Coutts, Alberta, and Sweetgrass, Montana, there linking up with the United States Continental Highway No. 87, already called "The Main Street of the Americas". This No. 87 Highway Main Street of the Americas is now completed from Coutts, Alberta, and Sweetgrass, Montana, clear to Guatemala via Great Falls, Denver, San Antonio, Laredo and Mexico City. We can all appreciate what this Main Street of the Americas will mean to the tourist trade, for this Highway will soon be linked up with South America and be connected with all main eastbound and westbound highways of continental United States. It will then be possible for automotive traffic to travel from South American countries via the United States, Canada and Alaska Highway to Fairbanks, Alaska. The potential business—tourist and commercial—arising from the use of this highway is beyond the imagination.

Of equal importance is the service which such a highway will and must render to the now-announced north circuit air route. Before I left my home in Edmonton the local newspaper, the *Edmonton Journal*, carried the headline: "Edmonton Link in Global Air Route". Terminal points for one air route will be New York, Newark, Chicago, Minneapolis, continuing directly northwest to Edmonton, where this service will join with the Sunshine Air Route Service from Texas and the East Mountain States through Great Falls, Lethbridge, Calgary and Edmonton, thence northwesterly to Whitehorse, Fairbanks, Anchorage, through the chain of the Aleutians to the Orient—there to serve the teeming starving millions with food, clothing and God knows what.

It will readily be observed that the part of the "Main Street of the Americas" within Canada is of international aspect. The province of Alberta has already sustained heavy costs incidental to the construction of a part of it. Construction of the gap between Edmonton and Dawson Creek will mean additional costs which the Province of Alberta could not, and should not face alone. It is within sound reason that a request should be made for federal assistance, and perhaps U.S. financial assistance as well, which is waiting for us, should we decide to ask for it, in order to complete construction of this very important gap. Our province of Alberta has before it an extensive road-building program involving well in excess of \$100,000,000 over a term of the next few years to properly serve its people as well as this main north and south artery, but will undoubtedly assume its reasonable share in connection with the Edmonton-Dawson Creek short-cut.

The Alaska Highway is an established fact and if this additional construction is proceeded with immediately (and it should be) the cost will be much less than if action thereon is deferred. The revenue which will be derived from the investment incidental to such construction will soon be retrieved.

The Alaska Highway, as now existing, is being improved continually and to such an extent that it already has accommodated and is accommodating now, considerable traffic, and with continuance of the present program, should be capable by the opening of the 1947 season, of accepting substantial civilian travel. Refueling stations are at the present time being installed between Dawson Creek and Whitehorse. Accommodation for over-night stops is now being provided at many points such as Blueberry, Trutch, Fort Nelson, Summit, Muncho Lake, Coal River, Mile 710, Teslin Lake and Watson Lake.

No other nation was ever enriched by an inheritance of such great proportions as this wonderland—in itself an immense Empire. It is a great country, ready to serve humanity and beckoning for us to get to work on it.



Let us do so now. Federal, provincial and municipal governments have nothing to lose, but all stand to benefit enormously by the opening up of the new North in a big way.

Honourable Members of the Senate of Canada and the Tourist Traffic Committee—that is my message to you. It is within your scope and your power to advance such recommendations as will effect the desired and much needed results of such a national welfare measure.

I have in my possession a resolution directed to the Government of Canada, copy of which I now leave in your hands. May I put it in the record without reading it.

RESOLUTION OF THE  
EDMONTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN CONNECTION  
WITH THE ALASKA HIGHWAY

Whereas the government of the United States of America constructed, for defence purposes during the war, a modernly-built gravelled highway between Dawson Creek, British Columbia (the northern terminus of the Northern Alberta Railways) and Fairbanks, Alaska, of which 1,221.4 miles is in Canada, and which has been acquired by the Canadian Government; and

Whereas the completion of a proper highway from the Montana border to Dawson Creek, British Columbia, there to link up with the Alaska Highway, would open up to civilization the last great northwest and be the means of establishing many veterans and others, developing the fabulous natural resources of that great area, industry and tourist business, all of which would be of great benefit to all of the people of Canada; and

Whereas for defence purposes, the interest and strategy of the governments of the United States and Canada at all times must be closely integrated and the Alaska Highway is undoubtedly a national undertaking necessary for the defence of the North American continent; and

Whereas the cost of constructing and bringing to a proper standard of hard-surfaced highway between Edmonton and Dawson Creek, bridging the gap between the Montana border and Fairbanks, Alaska, is such that the provinces through which it runs should not be asked or expected to bear the entire cost of the construction of the highway in addition to bearing the cost of highways required for their own purposes; and

Whereas it is apparent that the United States, for the security of the continent, is anxious that the defence of the continent should not be confined to ocean and air communication as a means of transportation between continental United States and Alaska, and is interested in the development of inland communications by means of the Alaska Highway;

Therefore be it resolved that in view of the significance and the necessity of a modern highway between the Montana border and Fairbanks, Alaska, the governments of Canada, Alberta and British Columbia should either provide the funds to construct and hard-surface, as soon as possible a road connecting the highway systems of the United States and Canada with the highways of Alaska by bridging the gap in the Alaska Highway between Edmonton and Dawson Creek, British Columbia, or should approach the government of the United States with a view to obtaining a portion of the funds for that purpose.



The foregoing resolution was passed by the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and directed to be presented to the government of the Dominion of Canada and the governments of Alberta and British Columbia.

Dated at Edmonton, August 2, 1946.

EDMONTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

C. D. JACOX, *President.*

JAS. A. CHRISTIANSEN, *Chairman,*  
*Alaska Highway Committee.*

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes Mr. Christiansen's brief. Are there any questions?

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Mr. Christiansen mentioned at page 3 of his brief that the road was a gift from the United States to Canada. My understanding was that we paid the cost of building the road.

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: I am quite certain, Senator, that it constitutes a gift. What Canada did pay for, and Mr. Phinney will correct me if I am wrong, was the telephone installations and I believe the construction of air strips along the highway.

Hon. Mr. DUFFUS: For war purposes?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Right.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: You have dealt very fully with this project. You think it has great possibilities as a tourist highway?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Decidedly so.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: In these days governments are pretty hard pressed for money. On the one hand, demands are being made for expenditures, and on the other hand there are demands for reductions in taxation. I would like to get your opinion on one point. If, say, \$10,000,000 was available for hard-surfacing or improving roads, is it your judgment that it would be better business to spend that on the highway than on existing roads in the mountains in Alberta, as for instance between Edmonton and Jasper, or Jasper and Lake Louise?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Senator Crerar, we all admit that our mountain roads are highly important to tourist traffic. Those of us who travel over our mountain highways and some of the accessory roads to them find they are in excellent condition. In our opinion hard-surfacing of them would not in every instance be practical. If that amount of money was available for highway improvement it could not, in our opinion, be utilized to better advantage than on a proper approach to the Alaska Highway.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: Let us explore that a little bit. Our American friends are accustomed to travelling on hard-surface roads. They do not like gravel or dust. I can recall very tangible proof that I had of that several years ago, when as a matter of fact American cars would come into Canada at boundary points and, after travelling for some distance, turn back because they did not like to travel in dust. That pretty well convinced me that one of the essentials for the development of American tourist traffic in Canada were hard-surface roads. I take it that you do not agree with that?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: I do not agree with it, Senator Crerar, but many of our approaches to the mountain resorts are now hard-surfaced or being hard-surfaced. That applies from the Main Street of the Americas, to which I referred, from Coutts, Alberta, to Calgary. Within a comparatively short time that highway will be hard-surfaced.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: It will be finished by the end of next year.



Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: And from Calgary to Banff it is hard-surfaced or being hard-surfaced, and there are excellent highways from Banff to Lake Louise and over the mountain road to Jasper. Some of them are oiled now, I believe, Mr. Fallow?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Yes.

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Dust, Senator Crerar, has not been a great factor over the actual mountain roads. Coming up to the northern approach to Jasper, which we love so much, part of the highway from Edmonton to Jasper is hard surfaced and is continually being improved.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: I think Alberta has done a good job on its highways. I do not always agree with Mr. Fallow, but I will say that to him now.

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: It has.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: You have a hard-surface road now from Banff to Calgary, but it has always seemed to me that if you had hard-surface roads from Edmonton to Jasper and from Jasper to Lake Louise and into the Waterton Lake Parks, which are very popular with American tourists, the Alberta government and people would receive a much better dollar-and-costs return on the money invested in the road improvements than if an equivalent amount was spent on the Alaska Highway.

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: The Hon. Mr. Fallow will be called, and I should much prefer that he deal with that question.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: You spoke of a direct route from Edmonton to Dawson Creek which would shorten the present route by about 135 miles. That would be pretty much a new route?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: That is what is called the Whitecourt cut-off.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: How much would it cost to finish that?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: I believe the engineers could deal better with that..

The CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Mr. Fallow will be before us shortly.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: In your brief you refer to a route between the Montana Border and Fairbanks, Alaska. How far is that and where is it? Will you show it to us on the map?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: It starts here (indicating on map) at Coutts, Alberta, right south of the wonderful city of Lethbridge, Senator Buchanan's city, and passes through Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, Grand Prairie, up to Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, and over to Muncho Lake and Whitehorse, and on to Fairbanks, Alaska, a distance of 2,350 miles. approximately.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: That is the modern highway that is spoken of as between the Montana Border and Fairbanks, Alaska, is it?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: It is nearly all through Canada?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: What is the distance from Coutts to Edmonton?

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Approximately 450 miles, as we now travel.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: 400.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions? If not, we will hear Mr. Fallow.



**Hon. W. A. Fallow, Minister of Public Works, Province of Alberta.**

Mr. Chairman, honourable members, I am very glad of this opportunity to add my contribution to what my good friend Mr. Christiansen has already said to you. I subscribe whole-heartedly to the things that he has stated in his brief. I understand that the submissions today are to be in relation to tourist traffic. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that there are many phases which cannot be excluded when you speak of tourist traffic. First, of course, there is transportation. Before you can expect to have tourist traffic you must have transportation, all kinds of transportation, as well as communication, whether by highways, railways, airways or waterways.

Then, gentlemen, another very important phase when you are considering tourist traffic is the economic possibilities, because while a great many people go on tours for pleasure purposes I submit that the great majority of them have in mind some economic advantage. They want to know what are the economic possibilities of the area they visit, and whether it would be advantageous to them or their associates to develop certain of the natural resources there. Of course, when the tourist goes on a long visit he usually wants to do a little fishing too, and hunting. At least, most tourists seem to take fishing tackle and hunting equipment along with them. But I submit that something of vastly greater importance, and something which cannot be divorced from the tourist industry, is the relative importance in the spotlight of world affairs which the particular area may occupy in the minds of the people concerned. As you know, gentlemen, self preservation is the first law of nature. That is true whether it relates to the combined military strength of a country or to the safety of the individual. Now, looking at the possibilities for tourist travel along those lines, I submit that there are few if any places in the known world which are more in the public mind to-day than the route we are now discussing, the Alaska Highway. I am satisfied that as time goes on it will occupy a more and more important position in the spotlight of world affairs. I say that because, in the first place, nature has provided this part of the world with very great natural facilities. When you are considering a very large area, such as this, there are certain points which immediately present themselves for consideration, and one of these is the natural advantages of the area. I submit, gentlemen, that the war years demonstrated the practicability and very great advantages, from both the economic and military points of view, of this Alaska Highway, and I am thoroughly convinced that as time goes on it will become more and more important.

Senator Crerar has spoken about the economic phase of the situation. I feel very much the same as he does, that highways are essential to the economy of this country. I am satisfied that as time goes on there will be not only the present Alaska Highway but several other routes connecting the United States with Alaska, because south of the border there are 140 million people who are desperately interested in what I consider is the most important strategic point in the world to-day.

Highways are most important from the economic point of view because they are a self-liquidating proposition. Not only will they pay their own way, but they will bring very large revenues to the Dominion and the provinces as well as to the people living in the areas which those highways serve. That being the case, Mr. Chairman, we cannot afford not to improve these highways. I am not speaking of the Alaska highway. I think it is one of the most important highways on the North American continent, and I am satisfied that it will always be considered as such and grow in importance as time goes on. But I am also covering highways from any part of the country. I am glad to see British Columbia building a connecting link with the Alaska highway.



That will do all of western Canada immeasurable good. Similarly, in any part of Canada a highway will mean large tourist traffic, persons looking for business investments, development of the natural resources, and in the end it will mean largely increased revenues for both the Dominion and the provinces.

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: May I suggest that under present conditions construction of a highway should always precede railway construction for opening up a country?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I agree with you. In order to start a country on its way to progress you must punch a hole through so that people can move backwards and forwards. Public opinion will force development along other lines. In our part of the country for a good many years up until the war came on we had the record of passing the greatest tonnage of freight by air of any country in the world. Then the demand started for highways because air transport was very expensive. We are gradually pushing the frontiers back, and as we push them back the demand for highways becomes that much greater because the possibilities are there.

I judge, Mr. Chairman, from some questions that have already been asked that your committee would like to know something about the connecting link between the international border at Coutts, or the international gap, and the Waterton lakes through Alberta to the Alaska highway. We have a very ambitious program outlined in Alberta and it is already well under way. This year we have just about completed a new highway from Coutts to Lethbridge. That is a standard gravel highway now. It will be hard surfaced next year. Any statements that I make here will of course depend on economic conditions.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: What is that distance?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: It is eighty miles from Coutts to Lethbridge. From Lethbridge on the highway has a light surfacing, and has had for a number of years. When the war broke out and it was impossible to get asphalt, and particularly difficult to get machinery, we had to abandon further work. All we could do was to try and hold it as best we could, in spite of the heavy military traffic it had to carry, as well as an all-time high in commercial traffic. But those conditions have righted themselves to some extent, and while it seems almost impossible to get machinery, we can get all the asphalt we want. However, now it is almost impossible to get anybody to do the work. I might say that on the last three contracts I have called for I have had only one bid, and that from a man who is doing a very big job for us now.

From Lethbridge on to Calgary we intend by the end of next year to have a complete hard-surfaced job; from Calgary to Edmonton it is completely hard-surfaced; from Calgary to Banff the hard-surfacing will be completed by the end of this month; from Banff to Cochrane we are building a brand new road which will be hard-surfaced next year. So by the end of next year I hope to have the highway from Coutts to Edmonton completely hard-surfaced, and from Calgary to Banff also. We may be able to go beyond that. I want to get something done on the Jasper highway west of Edmonton. We have forty miles now.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: How is that road from Banff to Jasper?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: It is in very good shape. It is not hard-surfaced. There is some oil on it. It is dusty in spots, but on the whole it is all right. You are not supposed to travel too fast, and if you don't the dust doesn't trouble much.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: The Dominion is responsible for roads in the national park.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Yes.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: That is only open part of the year, so it would hardly be necessary to hard-surface it.



Hon. Mr. FALLOW: The Dominion authorities would be able to answer that.

The CHAIRMAN: You speak of hard-surface. Would you call the present road from Lethbridge to Calgary hard-surfaced?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: To all intents and purposes it is. It is a very light surfacing and would not stand up; it would go to pieces in a few years. We started out to put the light surfacing on first of all in order to get away from the dust nuisance and at the same time to make the road more economical to maintain than a gravel road.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: What is the distance between Lethbridge and Calgary?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: One hundred and thirty miles, if you go by McLeod. There is a shorter way by the Sunshine Trail, but the main travelled road is one hundred and thirty miles. The work we are doing now is a permanent job.

The CHAIRMAN: Similar to what you have done between Calgary and High River?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Yes. It is a complete armour-coated job. I hope it will be there long after I am gone. All our hard-surfacing is done on the same basis.

The CHAIRMAN: You might now tell us something about the new road from Edmonton to Dawson Creek.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Perhaps I had better indicate it here on this map. The present circuitous route is around here because of the Swan hills which rise about thirty-five hundred feet. All the settlement is on this road from Peace river over to Grande Prairie.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: There is not much settlement on the proposed new road?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: As far as Whitecourt. That is why we call it the Whitecourt cut-off. From Whitecourt to Sturgeon Lake, a distance of a little over one hundred miles, there is no settlement whatever.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: But there is timber?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: There is one large stand of spruce timber around Iosican lake. It is not on the map. That is a little over one hundred miles, and outside of that one large stand of spruce timber it would be uneconomical for the province to undertake to build the hundred and twenty-five miles through there when there is practically no settlement whatever to be served.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any agricultural possibilities?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Very little until you get to Smoky river; then you are beginning to get into more prairie. It is between Whitecourt and Sturgeon lake. It would not pay the provincial government to put a road in there, because there is nothing to be served, but it does cut off a hundred and thirty miles on the route from Dawson Creek to the Alaska highway.

The CHAIRMAN: Would it be costly construction?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: No, not if you build an ordinary hard gravel highway through there. We have all the engineering data on it. I completed that at the request of the United States government. There was very strong talk of their building that connecting link themselves. As a matter of fact they had gone so far as to ask the Alberta government if we would build it in case they decided to proceed. We told them we would.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: What would that cost per mile?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Standard gravel would cost about \$5,000 a mile. That is a little higher than the ordinary construction cost in the province to construct a standard gravel highway.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Would it be an entirely new road, or would you use the road to Whitecourt?



Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Oh, yes, we are building a road from Edmonton to Whitecourt now. We are about two-thirds the way on.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: That would be built?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: That would be built. It has all been laid out with the view someday of forming a link.

The CHAIRMAN: Would it be a hard-surfaced road? I believe the members of the Chamber of Commerce spoke of a hard-surfaced road.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I could not give any accurate figures on that without knowing the availability of construction materials—

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: And other conditions?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW:—length of haul, and that kind of thing; but ordinarily our hard-surfacing costs from \$20,000 to \$25,000 a mile. \$25,000 is about the highest we have had to go yet.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: Increased costs to-day would put that up about fifty per cent?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I imagine so, sir. Because contractors are getting pretty scary about accepting contracts, for the reason that costs are rising so rapidly that they are afraid to take any chances without putting their prices up high enough. Just as soon as these labour troubles get over, if they ever are, I imagine that will right itself.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you expect the Dominion to share in the construction of that road to link up with the Alaska highway?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: You mean the Whitecourt cut-off, sir?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I have always regarded and still so regard it as not only a national but an international problem. The United States acknowledged that fact and were quite prepared at one time to do it, and I thought they would. If the war had not taken a turn for the better they would have constructed that link. For that reason I had a survey completed with all the engineering information to go ahead and build the road. So I think the province should expect a good deal of support from the senior authorities in building the road. The only use the road would be to the province would be to shorten the distance to the Alaska highway; it would serve no local purpose whatsoever.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: Is it not possible that military necessity will compel us to make a real good highway there?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I agree with you absolutely. I think the strategic importance of that part of the world can scarcely be measured.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Fallow, in relation to the possibilities for tourist traffic on the Alaskan Highway would you tell the committee about the meeting we attended at Great Falls, and convey to the members the strong sentiments that existed in relation to the highway?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: It would be very difficult, Mr. Chairman, for me to measure the enthusiasm of that crowd down there. I never saw a more enthusiastic bunch of people, who were more determined to see this thing through from their own point of view—selfish, I suppose, but they realize the ultimate advantages of it. They were the most enthusiastic bunch of people I have ever met.

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: Particularly when you came around I suppose?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I did not dampen their enthusiasm any.

The CHAIRMAN: I may say that at this conference which we attended in Great Falls, Montana, in the early part of the year, the sentiment was enthusiastic and pronounced that the United States would be prepared to pay part of the cost of maintaining that road, or putting it into better condition.



Hon. Mr. FALLOW: My feeling is that the cost is no problem to the United States. They do not look at it as a problem at all. But since the war is over and there is no agreement between Canada and the United States they are a little leary about suggesting anything. However I do not think money is any problem.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: And they are not Social Crediters down there either?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: No; at least I do not think so.

Hon. Mr. GERSHAW: Could I get your opinion, Mr. Fallow, of the wisdom of building that 100-mile route in order to save 135 miles? The cost would be tremendous and you would be asking tourists to go through a country where there was no settlement and no opportunity for assistance should they need it, whereas the other route would accommodate many places.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: There is only a little over a hundred miles.

The CHAIRMAN: From Whitecourt on.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: The connecting link between Sturgeon Lake and Whitecourt is a little over one hundred miles. I have no doubt that if the road was put through there would be a rush of people to get in there to put up service stations and accommodation of various kinds. If that link were completed there would be heavy traffic, as indicated by the sentiment of the United States. Everyone you talk to wants to go to Alaska, but they are afraid to start out unless they are reasonably sure that they can go through.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: But the Alberta government is not prepared to build that road?

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Not that hundred miles.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: I think I understand their reason for that attitude.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I believe I am only stating a fair proposition when I say it is not even a national problem, but is international.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: I may be wrong, but I doubt the wisdom of the American government considering spending U.S. funds to build a highway in another country.

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: Not in peace-time.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: That is true.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: In war-time it was different; the Alaska Highway project was definitely related to the war; but under present conditions I think the spending of money there would lead to a good deal of trouble.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: That is why I would not even suggest it.

Hon. Mr. ROBINSON: As a defence program I think its maintenance is as important as its construction.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: I do not think there is any more important spot on the face of the earth than the land link between the old and the new world. Geography has placed it there and there is nothing we can do about it.

The CHAIRMAN: May I say, Senator Crerar, that in my remarks concerning the United States contributing to the highway I was not trying to convey the opinion that I thought what was proposed in Great Falls would be acceptable to the United States Government, but only that they expressed very enthusiastic sentiment there. They were thinking not only of the importance of the highway in relation to tourist traffic but as it affects defence. I think they still have that in their minds.

Hon. Mr. FOSTER: That is undoubtedly true.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions of Mr. Fallow, we will call on Mayor Ainlay of Edmonton. He did not come to present a statement, but he can speak in support of the city of Edmonton.



**Mayor Harry Ainlay**, Edmonton, Alberta: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I expect that senators have to eat as well as the rest of us, so I will not delay you long. I hope that the few words I have to say will not be taken as an indication that we in our community lack interest in this enterprise. I may say that in the city of Edmonton, during the war, we had at one time 15,000 American service men. Practically 100 per cent of that personnel has returned to the United States.

The CHAIRMAN: I suppose they took some Canadian wives with them.

Mr. AINLAY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, but many of them are bringing them back again. The chief commander of the American forces wrote me when he was being transferred to the Philippines and said that as soon as he was free of military service in the United States he and his family would return to Edmonton and the northwest. They are coming back in large numbers. Those 15,000 men carry with them information regarding the Alaska Highway; those boys and their families certainly are interested in the place where they spent two or three years of their service and the work they accomplished. That is one reason why we in Edmonton feel there is a growing interest on the part of the United States as soon as we assure them that they can get through on the highway.

Last Monday there was a man called at my office, who writes extensively for *Esquire* and other American magazines. He, his family and secretary, had a trailer and were obtaining permission to go over the Alaska Highway. He intended to spend the next two or three months there and then return to the United States to write his articles for the American magazines. He spoke very enthusiastically of the demands in the States for access to the highway. It seems to me, gentlemen, that it is absolutely ridiculous for the Federal Government to spend large sums of money in maintaining a highway which really does not go any place. The southern end of it is impractical from the standpoint of assured traffic. If we are going to make any use of it and maintain it we must give an exit on the south end of it to the settled communities. Whether it has hard surface or gravel is beside the point, but we must know that when we start out in all kinds of weather that we are able to reach the Alaska Highway.

May I say that the persons who sponsored the dog team tour from Fairbanks to Winnipeg last year are bringing a six reindeer team this year, which will travel on into the western states. The reindeer are now being conditioned for that trip. It is an advertising scheme, and as I say it will go down into the western states. Beyond that they are building 500 miles north of Fairbanks a large hunting lodge to which they expect to attract large numbers of Americans. All of this seems to me to show that the opening up of this road is important in order that the traffic may come in.

I do not speak only for the city of Edmonton, but have been in touch with Calgary and spent considerable time recently in Lethbridge in conversation with officials. This interest is not centred only in Edmonton but from Coutts right through. I can assure you however that the interest in our community is red hot.

Hon. Mr. MURDOCK: What is your thought concerning that 100-mile cut-off?

Mr. AINLAY: It is a matter of engineering costs. It may be cheaper at the present time to build a road up to standard, but when a capital expenditure is being made on a hard surface road 135 miles is a considerable saving. I am sure the province will still have to maintain the other road in a serviceable condition for the community that it now serves, but 135 miles is a considerable saving.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Of course by travelling over the 100-mile route it would mean less cost than maintaining the other road?



Mr. AINLAY: Yes, it is the capital cost of maintenance. We have people coming into Edmonton every day from up the Alaska Highway, and their complaint always is that when they reach Dawson Creek they become anxious as to whether there is going to be a shower. If there is a little rain they are bogged down. It seems a shame that they can travel over so many hundreds of miles of good substantial road only to strike a spot a few miles from Edmonton and find that they cannot get on to the rest of the highway; I would commend the proposition to the committee, and I hope that you will be able to recommend some favourable progress in that respect.

Hon. Mr. HORNER: You say that a number of Americans who have been up in Edmonton would like to return and settle there?

Mr. AINLAY: They not only would like to, but they are doing so. Many of them have come back and entered into business in Edmonton. Even the officer who has taken General Gaffney's position as officer in charge of the American forces, who has been there only a few weeks, said to me that if he was not transferred from there during his military service, it was his intention to remain in the community. The feature that is so attractive is the cool evenings. The people find they can do their work in the daytime and sleep in comfort at night. Where they come from the nights are so hot that they cannot enjoy them. They like our long hours of sunshine, and they are coming back not only in prospect but in actuality.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ainlay.

May I say that I have in my possession a book issued by the United States Department of Interior, National Park Service. Its title is "Recreational Resources of the Alaska Highway and Other Roads in Alaska". I have not read it thoroughly but I find it contains many indications, that the United States intends to establish a number of national parks in Alaska. I am stating that to show to the members of the committee what the United States has in mind in relation to the development of this highway.

Mr. AINLAY: May I say one further word, Mr. Chairman, in regard to United States financial aid. I do not think it is out of the way at all for the Canadian Government to approach the United States government in regard to financing even in peacetime. It seems to me that the free entry and use of the Alaska Highway as a corridor to their territory is good consideration for financial aid. The point is that the road does lead to American territory. During the war there was an exchange of air bases and submarine bases, and I do not think there should be any hesitation on the part of the Canadian government in asking the United States government for assistance. While this committee is dealing with tourist traffic, I do not think you can possibly separate that subject from military, commercial and industrial developments.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor.

Hon. Mr. FALLOW: Mr. Chairman, may I say just a word on this connecting link between Edmonton and the B.C. border? I do not want the committee to get the idea that nothing is being done on that. By the end of next year we shall have a standard gravel road from the British Columbia border just east of Pouce Coupee right through to Edmonton—on the present route, where all the settlement is—and we hope to have the road to the Whitecourt cut-off completed to Whitecourt. Beyond there it is not a provincial problem.

Mr. CHRISTIANSEN: Mr. Chairman, honourable members of the Senate Committee, I feel that I would be remiss in my duty if I failed on behalf of the delegation from the West to express thanks for the splendid reception you have



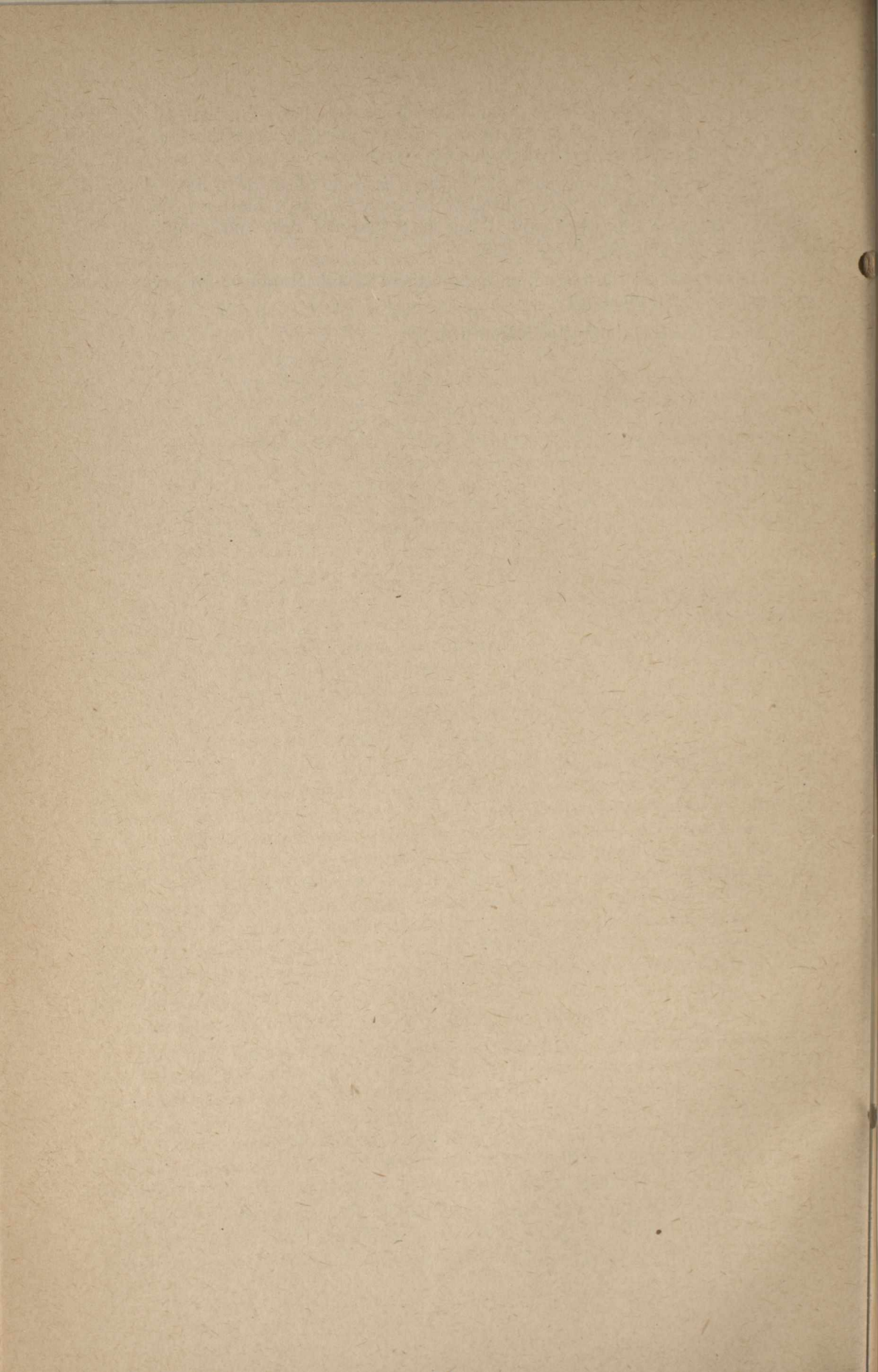
accorded us and the enthusiasm you have shown for the Alaska Highway. We have come a long way to meet with you, and we are convinced that our lengthy trip has been worthwhile. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, it has been a great pleasure to have you with us. You have given us much valuable information on a matter in which the whole country is interested, and I am sure that not only our committee but Canada as a whole will benefit from it.

(Discussion off the record, on appointment of subcommittee for preparation of a report to the Senate.)

At 1 p.m., the committee adjourned.

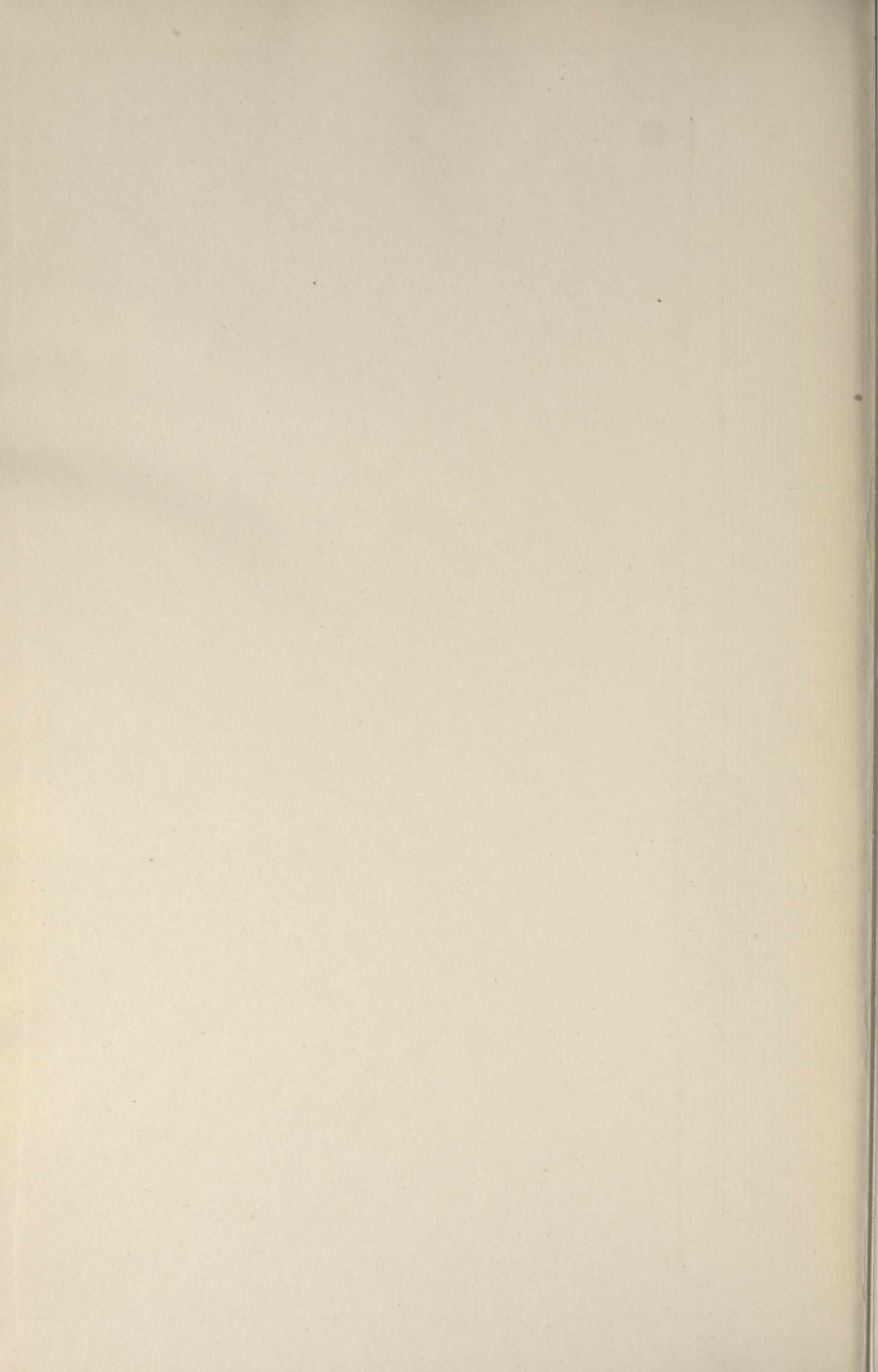


















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