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Highway Advocated . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

transportation into Siberia, that not only could have been focussed on the original Manchurian situation, but also could have supplied the Russians behind their lines and even transported supplies through to the Mediterranean, even the most desperate of the paranoic leaders of Japan and Germany would have hesitated before attack. In any case, the prosecution of the war would have been tremendously accelerated without the great losses of shipping on the seven seas.

Now for the first time in 50 years, the international incubus is lifted. Japan is defeated. Her great ally, Great Britain, is now an ally of the U.S. and Russia. The ban of Great Britain, that once involved the U.S., is presumably no longer effective.

International Co-operation

We are, optimistically perhaps, on the verge of international co-operation. A logical and free evolution of transportation can ensue. Since the idea of international transportation was first conceived 70 years ago the ordinary accretions of construction have immensely favored the ultimate realization of the project.

Since then not only has the transSiberian railroad been built, but in addition, 1500 miles of railroad headling toward East Cape on the Bering Sea have been constructed. Eight hundred miles of railroad have been built north from Seattle into Canada; a railroad survey was made during 1942 and 1943 from Prince George to Teller on the Bering Sea, a distance of 2260 miles.

This job, one of the most spectacular in the whole history of the U.S. Engineers, was completed in nine months.

The Engineers blasted their way through a trailess wilderness under conditions that tested the courage, the endurance and the patriotism of these valiant men. They worked through the winter of 1942 and 1943, the toughest winter in 50 years of Alaska history, with the thermometer ranging 70 degrees below zero. This driving urge was generated by the invasion of Alaska—the occupation of the Aleutians. There was the threat that sea lanes would be cut off and a helpless Alaska would be forced to surrender.

The job was to be done at once but in mid-1943 the Jap had spent his force, the threat no longer existed and the work was abandoned so that no unnecessary diversion of military force and material would occur.

This survey is very valuable. It shows that a highly efficient line can be built through to Bering Sea at surprisingly low cost.

This article is devoted, of course, to the construction of a link in this great project of inter-continental transportation—a highway link involving the construction of a little more than 600 miles.

It will connect the usable portion of the military highway, extending from Whitehorse to Fairbanks, with a direct line south of Prince George, the most efficient terminal for both road and rail connection with the transportation system of the continent.

The foregoing discussion is made to give the reader the vitally important picture of what this project means in its entirety. Therefore, in the construction of this link we must be governed by the great ultimate purpose of the job.

From this viewpoint, the highway should approximate as nearly as possible a future railroad route; therefore, it should observe the axioms that govern determination of a railroad route.

Axioms For New Highway

These axioms are: (1) The line should be direct between the major objectives. Minor objectives should be served by branch lines so that through traffic will not be wound around and distorted by small villages and individual interests. (2) The line must secure low gradients by following streams to their heads. (3) Following the truism that railroads are built for tonnage, the line should be controlled by accessibility of the population; it should penetrate areas sufficiently rich in natural resourses that additional population would be generated, and must, of necessity, tie in with all transportation heads.

All factors including climate, precipitation, snowfall, terrain, character of material accessibility, etc., must favor cheap, rapid construction and economic maintenance.

All these desiderata are realized by this projected route between Prince George and Whitehorse. The line is as direct as a crow's flight and is, of course, the shortest line possible in the country. It is the interior line of flight from Whitehorse south. The line parallels the lake drainages for 200 miles south of Prince George, which means low grades and easy accessibility. It follows the Skeena river to its head and successive drainages clear through to Whitehorse.

For these reasons a maximum .6 percent grade can be secured for a railroad. There is a complete absence of the bridge construction that has characterized other routes under consideration. Only one bridge requires steel, the 525 foot crossing at the Skeena River.

This western route penetrates a marvellously rich virgin country where deposits of gold and silver are already in production. The route bisects perfectly the geological formations containing the bulk of the hemisphere's mineral wealth. Gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, manganese, nickel and other metals have been known for many years to exist in this area. Only lack of transportation has prevented development.

Anthracite coal lies along this route for 60 miles. Geological studies indicate favorable structures for oil. Timber, agriculture and grazing lands are more than sufficient to support the anticipated industrial population generated by its mineral potentialities.

The area has a wonderful winter and summer climate, very dry and invigorating. It has little snow. Because of its proximity to the ocean and Japanese current its summer season is from a month to six weeks longer than the areas lying further to the east.

Its scenery rivals Switzerland in its grandeur and Africa in the primitive abundance of wild game. Its lakes and rivers furnish the finest kind of sport fishing. It is the richest virgin country left in North America. Only the taboos of conflicting interests and international intrigue have compelled it to lie dormant.

Construction conditions are extremely favorable. There is very little solid rock. The characteristic terrain is that of long easy gravelled country. Construction aspects can best be expressed in terms of average cost per mile, which should not exceed $20,000 for a 24-foot gravelled surface highway, or a total of only $13,000,000. And so from this angle the total length of little over 600 miles (if the cost is shared with Canada) would mean that the U. S. would assume expenses of only 300 miles, or 6½ million dollars.

350,000 People Want To Go North

Time Magazine has made a research of the number of people of all kinds desiring to make an automobile trip to Alaska. The total reaches the astounding figure of 350,000, almost five times the existing Alaska population. This interest reflects the great publicity which attended construction of the Alaska Military Highway.

However, as stated by the War Department, the highway's only purpose is to serve two airbases and also to be a flight ribbon to act as a guide for flyers. All other purposes were subordinate to these two considerations. As a result, the route crosses the many drainages of the country without regard for grade, rise and fall, climbing a total of 30,000 feet between Dawson Creek and Whitehorse. It is not designed as a supply line to Alaska nor does it penetrate an area of known resources. It has scant appeal either from the viewpoint of scenic beauty or game. Its only rail connection is the "Toonerville' railroad that extends 500 miles from Edmonton to Dawson Creek, requiring six hours more travel time than to reach Prince George from Edmonton.

By automobile, Dawson Creek, the terminus of the Alaska highway, is practically inaccessible. The connection with the continental road system consists of a farm mud road that would be rendered impassable with a few days of rain.

Therefore, if the 350,000 prospective travellers to the north are not going to be blocked and defeated, the construction of the connecting link is mandatory.

We have, in the western route, the only line economically feasible for road and rail, the only line for land-based air travel between the Pacific Northwest, the great north and ultimately Siberia. It stands a test of both strategic and commercial utility. It should have been built long ago.

Very apparently we are soon to be confronted with the transition period from a war to peactime economy, with all the confusion and unemployment that such conditions have always created. Are we to stand aside and permit this problem to widen into chaos?

The project of a highway to Alaska west of the Rockies offers not only immediate employment but natural and continuing employment in the development of the region as well. This has been the traditional American solution to such problems in the past.

Furthermore, we are told of an awakening Asia and Russia. Eric Johnston recently returned from Siberia with a wonderful story of the great demands of a dynamic Russia. What greater project can there be than the construction of a land transportation system which would put us in direct and rapid contact with practically the world's population—a billion people — at a time when the teeming millions of Asia are springing from the furrows of primitive production and communication systems?

Canada and the U. S. have stood together in two great wars. We have, with our allies, conquered a terrible enemy. We stand together still in the conquest of a third unrelenting foe. With us is our greatest ally, Russia. If we can achieve this unanimity of purpose for war, certainly in the demands of peace we can continue this glorious teamwork.

Final In Ontario Vote

TORONTO, June 26 (?) — The results of the service voting in the Ontario Provincial election have been announced and only one seat changed hands. That is the riding of Wellington North and it has swung over to the Liberal column on the basis of the service voting. The civilian vote had given the seat to Progressive Conservative candidate John Root, but the combined civilian-plus-service total gives the seat to Liberal candidate R. A. McEwing. He received 198 service ballots to 168 for the P.C. candidate.

Here are the final party standings, with all the votes in:

Progressive Conservatives, 66.
Liberals, 11.
C.C.F., 8.
Liberal Labor, 3.
Labor-Progressive, 2.

C.C.F. Leader Joliffe and Liberal Leader Hepburn both received strong support from the service ballots but this was not enough to enable them to catch up with their opponents, who beat them on the civilian voting.

Whifflets From The Waterfront

J. H. Todd & Sons Ltd., operators of Inverness and Klemtu canneries, has let the contract to the McLeans Shipyard at Seal Cove, Prince Rupert, for another combination seineboat and packer which will join the company's fleet as Invercan No. 5. The vessel will be 56 feet in length and will be equipped with a 100 h.p. Caterpillar engine. Construction of the new boat will commence at mid-July and is to be finished by the end of the year.

DAVE HOUSTON DUE HOME SOON

Another member of the first small group of young local soldiers which left here for overseas in June, 1940, is coming home soon. He is Cpl. David Houston, son of Mr. and Mrs. V. G. Houston. In a month or six weeks Davie is due back and his family is naturally keenly expecting the happy day. He went through the Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

SALMON WORK GETS LARGER

Dr. A. L. Pritchard directing Quite Extensive Research Operations

Skeena River salmon research work, under the direction of Dr. A. L. Pritchard of the Nanaimo Biological Station, is assuming quite extensive proportions with parties operating at present from Prince Rupert, Lakelse Lake and Babine Lake. Later parties will move into Morris Lake, south of Houston, to Bear Lake, north of Babine, Kispiox on the Skeena above Hazelton and the Witwancool River.

Dudley Foskett is in charge of a party of seven men at Babine while Roland Brett is at Lakelse with a party of four. They are engaged in various measures of tracing the life history of the salmon and conditions of propogation and life.

Dr. Pritchard is spending the summer in Prince Rupert district directing the work. He arrived in Prince Rupert June 24 after having driven up from Vancouver with Donald Milne, recently joined member of the Fisheries Research Board scientific staff in the capacity of zoologist. Mr. Milne, graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, is newly out of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

DRIVER UNHURT WHEN RAILWAY CAR HITS AUTO

James Forman, Northern B.C. Power company electrician, narrowly escaped serious injury at 3 p.m. Monday when his car was struck by a railway refrigeration car at the Cow Bay rail intersection. Forman was unhurt but the rear of his automobile was badly dented by the collision. The refrigerator car was travelling free, having been hunted to make a "flying switch." Forman told police that he was well onto the tracks before he saw the railway car and speeded his automobile in order to avoid being struck himself. He said he did not see a railway guard at the intersection to warn off motorists.

GREEK CARD GAME

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