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## DOMINION AID TO PROVINCIAL RAILWAYS.

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*Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Executive Council, approved by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the 4th day of November, 1887.*

The Committee of Council beg to draw the attention of the Dominion Government to the urgent need of Provincial railways for the development, in any adequate manner, of the vast latent resources of British Columbia, and to press her claim to a share of the large sums voted annually by the Parliament of Canada in aid of local railways.

Taking, only, the last session of Parliament, it is found that about two millions and a half of dollars were voted for such purposes, viz.:—Quebec over a million; Ontario, \$834,000; New Brunswick, \$354,000; and Nova Scotia, \$275,000.

These sums were doubtless expended in the best interests of the several Provinces named, and, therefore, of the whole Dominion; but it is felt that any assistance similarly given to British Columbia would become reproductive to the federal treasury in a much shorter period, and to a very much greater extent, than the subsidies above mentioned: it is an admitted and well-known fact that gold miners everywhere, but more particularly so on the Pacific Coast, are consumers greatly in excess of other communities, and tax-payers in proportion.

The extensive and important mining district of Cariboo is, comparatively speaking, deserted, and its numerous and almost limitless quartz ledges remain undeveloped for want of cheaper means of transport. A branch line from some point on the Canadian Pacific Railway into the heart of that district has become a necessity, and could hardly fail to prove itself, almost at once, of immense importance to the Dominion, as well as to the Province. It would, also, act as an important feeder to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In view of the mineral and timber wealth of Vancouver Island, and the very extensive and valuable fishing grounds adjacent thereto, the extension of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway to the northern end of the Island is an undertaking of great importance to the progress not only of the Island, but also of the whole of the North-West Coast. Without such extension the vast resources mentioned must remain only very partially utilized for many years.

A further and, it is submitted, a stronger argument, considered from a national point of view, can be urged in favour of this extension,—that in the event of war it would, by affording means of timely warning and rapid transport, very considerably lessen, if not altogether avert, the great danger of the valuable coal stores and the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway falling into the hands of the enemy by a *coup de main* *viâ* the northern end of Vancouver Island, Johnston's Straits, and Seymour Narrows. This consideration appeals to and affects Imperial as well as Dominion and Provincial interests.

The Okanagan and Shuswap Railway, connecting the waters of the Okanagan with those of the South Thompson River, is also a work of great importance, tending, as it would, to the rapid development of a vast region of country possessing great agricultural and pastoral possibilities, and believed to be rich in minerals. Such a line like that to Cariboo would become an important feeder to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The Committee of Council recommend that immediate steps be taken with a view to obtaining from the Dominion Government such substantial assistance as will enable these works to be undertaken, and, further, that a copy of this Minute, if approved, be forwarded to the Honourable the Secretary of State for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council.

Certified,

(Signed) T. ELWYN,  
*Deputy Clerk Executive Council.*

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