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D I A R Y

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HONORABLE HERBERT ANSCOMB

Minister of Public Works

VOLUME I

September 18th, 1942 to April 20th, 1944.

Monday - November 16th: (Cont'd)

Gray is not back. He gave me an outline of refunding proposals for North Vancouver, Port Moody and Kaslo, advising that they were in the hands of the bondholders committees, or were getting there and he hoped to have something more definite in a little while. He advised of some difficulty in Terrace collecting poll taxes from people working on Government projects there and said the matter was partly in hand but thought I should be advised on it. He discussed one or two problems that the Municipal Convention would bring to us - one was the setting up of municipal fire insurance protection themselves rather than doing it through the established fire insurance companies. The other request was that municipalities have power to licence beer parlors. I gave it as my view that I was opposed to both of them, but we would have to deal with them when the proposals came before the committee.

Mr. Scase telephoned to ask if I would find out from Mr. Perry if he had found it possible to use his services in connection with the Post-War Rehabilitation Council, and I advised him that I understood the committee had secured the services of a Civil Servant who was going to be transferred to their Department for the time being.

4:15 p.m.

Mrs. Popoff of Slocan City called and asked if we could do something to help them repair, or put in shape, the road from West Slocan to the Little Slocan. She said there were large numbers of Japanese there who were building huts for themselves at present but when that is done they will have nothing to do. She stated Mr. Walter Hartley of the B. C. Security Commission at Slocan is in charge of the Japanese and apparently said that he would be glad to put them to work if he had the machinery with which to do it. I said that I would investigate and if possible would do it, but the problem of getting machinery was very difficult as the Federal Government had borrowed almost all we had. Mrs. Popoff says she is satisfied that there is some machinery in the district which is not in use. She left with me two letters which she had written to Capt. C. S. Leary, M. L. A., and Mr. John Taylor, General Foreman, which I passed on to Mr. Dixon for a report from the Highway Board.

Tuesday - November 17th:

10:30 a.m. Council

Left on afternoon boat for Vancouver.

would have the same request from Howe Sound to be connected with Squamish, a work that had been left uncompleted but which was very expansive, and we agreed to let the matter rest for the time being.

I took up with the Cabinet in the morning the question of tolls on the Cariboo Highway, subsequent to the request of the transport people who used the road, and the Cabinet decided against the removal of the tolls.

Wednesday - January 20th:

9:45 a.m. Mr. Ramsay, District Engineer from Kamloops, called and had a chat with him, particularly with reference to the number of Japanese working on the Hope-Princeton, Sicamous-Revelstoke and Blue River Highways. I asked him to give me a report on it before he left for the Interior again. He referred to the 2800 Japanese population at the Trites Ranch outside of Hope, none of whom were working on the roads. This amazed me and I gathered from him that the male population were, according to themselves, fully occupied in getting sufficient wood in to keep the camp going. I was interested in this because I do not think that that is a necessary condition, certainly after the snow clears, and we should take it up with the Federal Government to have some of those men working.

Thursday - March 25th: (Cont'd)

The Premier had a letter from someone in Revelstoke suggesting that we should have one or two bulldozers put to work with the Japanese on the Revelstoke-Sicamous Road. I later discussed that with Mr. Carruthers, who said that was being arranged for, but they did not want to use it until it could be kept continuously at work.

I also discussed with the Premier the problem of Mrs. Stephenson, who wanted us to buy her property at 566 Michigan Street, consisting of two lots - 90 feet deep - with a two decker house on it. The Premier was rather inclined to think that we should finally get the entire block. Suggested we have the property valued.

I took up with the Premier the question of the Hazelton Bridge, in view of a letter which Mr. Kenney had sent me asking me to discuss it with the Premier. He, the Premier, was not as conversant with it as Mr. Kenney seemed to think. He agreed that we should discuss it with Mr. Kenney by letter if action had not already been taken.

Friday - March 26th:

I asked the Cabinet this morning with reference to the Port Mellon Road, as to whether they would care to have that portion of the road constructed, and they very definitely said "No." This was in connection with a letter I had received from Mr. Tupper today,

Monday - May 10th:

Left Princeton for Hope-Princeton Road inspection at 8:30 A.M. Went 36 miles on road - found 4 inches of snow on more than 15 miles at top. Arrived back in Princeton at 5:10 P. M. Consider that a great deal of work done. Found that Federal Government were proceeding to put a "tote" road through first and present width of portion now under construction not really wide enough. Consider it advisable to take both views up with them at once.

Had talk with Mr. Blomfield at the Hotel, who is a great advocate of the road, and told him no prospects of our going ahead with construction while the war is on. We hoped to have Japs do as much as possible meantime but that was a Federal Government undeftaking.

Called on Angus Nicholson at his camp high up in the mountain and gave him a lift back to town.

Had a chat with Mr. Forsyth.

Left for Merritt at 6:30 P. M., drove 33 miles, then had Mr. Anderson do balance of driving into Merritt. Road very narrow, very muddy and slippery. After 40 miles ran into heavy snow and blinding snow-storm for rest of trip. Arrived at Merritt 9:30 P.M. Took 3 hours to do 58 miles.

Called on Mr. Moore for a couple of minutes en route - partner of T. G. Stokes - at his lake property 16 miles out of Princeton.

Dr. Gillis met me on arrival at Merritt.

Arrived at Yale at 7:30 P. M.

Mileage today 132

Total Mileage 10,592

Wednesday - May 12th:

Left Yale at 8:30 A. M. and proceeded to Hope and then up Hope-Princeton Road to Trite's Camp, where we discussed problems with Mr. Hartley who is in charge of the camp, thence to Mile 17 - road terrible - while good progress generally on road found that most had been done by unemployed years ago, that Japs were doing little other than cutting wood to keep themselves warm.

Went over to Agassiz and down North Shore to Mission - crossed over Fraser and back to Vancouver on Chilliwack Road - arrived Vancouver at 6:45 p. m.

Mileage for day 171

Total mileage 10,763

Thursday - May 13th:

Called on Mr. Collins of Jap Security Commission re Hope-Princeton Road. He had left for Victoria this A. M. Arranged to see him on Wednesday next.

Called on Col. Swan with Mr. Carruthers and Mr. Anderson re road assistance from National Defence Department. Col. Swan not optimistic at all on the point. Considered it advisable to have Premier discuss matter with Col. Ralston while he is in Ottawa. I will wire or telephone him early in week.

Left Vancouver on 6:15 P. M. boat for Nanaimo - arrived at 8:45 P. M., arrived Victoria 11 P. M.

Mileage for today 114

Total mileage 10,877

to confirm the meeting in Revelstoke on June 12th, he was certain that was right, but I wanted to be sure that they did not want me for any other meetings because if not I was arranging a Kootenay trip and would be back in Revelstoke in time for that meeting on the 12th and one day prior thereto. He promised to confirm it this morning and advise me by wire today.

Left on the 1:20 P. M. boat for Vancouver.

CONFIDENTIAL

Friday - May 21st:

Yesterday in Vancouver I had a long conference with Commissioner Collins of the Japanese Commission with reference to the Hope-Princeton Road. He gave me a good deal of information in confidence, but the general tenor of it seemed to be that the Japanese could not get along very well with the present engineer - Mr. Lowe - who had created some of the difficulties. That he (Lowe) was now asking for more help and that they proposed to give him some but he saw no prospects of the Japanese doing any good work on a basis of fiddling around as they were now doing without modern machinery. About three miles of right-of-way had been cut through, but the Japanese themselves were saying that at the rate the machinery is coming it would all be grown up again and we would have to cut it out again; in other words there was no enthusiasm with them at all.

He (Collins) was anxious to get the road finished from Mile 11 across the flats to Tashmie, which district I remember well, but to do that he would have to have some heavy equipment. He rather felt that there was going to be some equipment let loose pretty soon as shipments to the North had practically ceased and he was going to discuss it with Mr. McNamara, Mines and Resources Chief, to see what could be done.

I pointed out to them that while we had no say in the matter we were generally opposed to the suggestion of a tote road through, that it would lead us no where other than to continual complaints from the residents at both ends asking that it be widened and put into shape, and that our Department felt that the road should be made full width as we go along, section by section. He said that the military department wanted the tote road so that they could get Bren gun carriers and other things through in an emergency.

I would say, generally speaking, the conference did not amount to very much, but he seemed satisfied that not only were we on the right track but that he wanted to get better service than was being done. I left with a very friendly impression that I could certainly go back again and perhaps between himself and Ottawa push the problem along a little more aggressively.

00 A. M. Mr. Harold D. Haywood of Ladysmith called with reference to some road allowances and other problems in front of some of his own and other residents' property on and around his plant. I was



Tuesday - June 1st:

Called on:- R. R. Burns, ex Liberal M.L.A; Lorne Campbell (was away); Mr. Caldicott; Mr. Herridge, M.L.A; Mr. Curran, Trail Times; Stewart McDiarmid, Conservative; Chas. Daley, ex Conservative candidate; Mr. Esling (in Ottawa).

Mr. Burns asked us to fix Deer Park Road - four or five hundred dollars would complete it - but we made no promise.

Left for New Denver and Nakusp at 11:30 a. m., arrived 6:15 p. m. Continued on to Edgewood, got within 5 miles of it, had dinner at that point and returned to Nakusp, arriving 10:15 p. m. Called on Ben Parkinson, Conservative and C. S. Leary, M. L. A. Mr. Parkinson advised me that Rushton had all the Government business for years, add the Arrow Lake Supply Company - Mr. Maxwell - nothing whatever?

Mileage on arrival	Total	11,945
" today		200

Wednesday - June 2nd:

Left New Denver at 7<sup>am</sup> A. M. Went direct to Sandon and then on to Kaslo, arrived at 12:15. Secured use of Forestry service boat and went to Lardo, arrived 2:15 p.m. Used Forestry truck and motored first to the celebrated Lardo Bridge built by Mr. Leary. Mr. Carruthers, Mr. Anderson and myself walked through the woods and over mountain trails for over 4 miles - took

here and proceeded to Cranbrook, via Fort Steele - arrived Cranbrook at 6:15 P. M.

Total Mileage	12,748
Mileage today	179

Monday - June 7th:

Left for Banff via Radium Hot Springs at 9:45 A. M. Called Dr. Green on the phone before leaving. He came to town and we visited several of his constituents, both Parties. Harold Winch arrived on A. M. train was leaving for Kimberley.

Arrived at Radium Hot Springs at 12:45 (noon) called on Mr. Oliver of Oliver's Lodge. Had lunch at Radium Springs and proceeded to Banff through the Park. Arrived Banff 5 P. M. (B.C. time) 6 P. M. Alberta time.

Saw black bear on road as we left Radium Springs and 7 outside Banff.

Mr. Walker of Mines & Resources met us on arrival. Had evening conference with him on Japanese problem and found it very disappointing. Seems to be cat chasing his own tail. Think the only solution is to put it right up to Ralston - we get no where as it is.

Total mileage	12,972
Mileage today	224

On the 6:55 for Vancouver direct. registered at King Edward Hotel, where I found wire and letters.

Total mileage	13,542
Mileage today	196

Mr. George Pearson left word at Hotel he would like to see me before he left for west at 7:05 P. M. I talked to him on telephone.

Mr. Hart telephoned me at Golden this A. M. We discussed plans generally. I asked him to return to Vancouver by car with me leaving 5 A. M. Sunday - think he will do so.

Friday - June 11th:

In and around Revelstoke.

Cashed cheque for \$25.00.

Spoke at a meeting at night at Mt. Cartier.

Saturday - June 12th:

Met Premier Hart at the train at 8:55 A. M. In and around City all day.

Man named Smythe came to see me about drainage to his property some months ago. He left me copy of a letter dated Nov. 26th addressed to Mr. Willett, Engineer. I told him I would see what it was. After he left I considered it must be the Japanese Commission who he is now claiming against. Letter with my papers - must write him.

Man named Lloyd called and asked for use of our two trucks to gravel road to his timber limits he wanted to start up. I found he was going to employ 40 Japs. I made no promise - said we had to conserve our machines but would let him know. He said Curtis had already loaned them to him for 1½ days - I said, "you are lucky - he had no right to do so."

Attended meeting at night in Avolia Theatre -

Chairman Mr.  
Candidate - J. MacKinnon spoke.  
H. Anscomb  
Premier Hart

Sunday - June 13th:

Left Revelstoke at 5 A. M. with Mr. E. C. Carson, took him as far as Kamloops where we arrived at 8:45 A. M. At this point inspected Public Works Dept. discussed local and Japanese problems with Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Anderson. Left at 10:30 A. M. with Mr. Anderson for Vancouver - arrived 7:15 P. M.

Total mileage	13,996
Mileage today	454

Monday - February 14th: (Cont'd)

and the work would be done by contractors, or we would do it ourselves and our existing human element set-up was enough to tackle the job. He was quite insistent that he would be a great benefit to our Department and that he would be around here until Thursday, and I had to advise him that I had no idea in my mind at all that I could give him an answer by Thursday. I suggested that he drop in and have a chat with Mr. Carruthers, which he did.

11:50 A.M. Mr. Tom King called, he just wanted to relieve my mind about the telephone poles and tress in the highway that I had written to our engineer, Talbot, about. He assured me that they were not far enough out in the road to be dangerous, as a matter of fact they were right alongside of where the sidewalk would be if one was ever put there. He referred to obstructions along by the Scovil property. He said that originally an elderly man - D. P. Kimpton - had a piece of his property taken and the engineer agreed not to have the trees removed while Mr. Kimpton was alive, and that he was a very old man now. I said we would try and do what he wanted.

12:05 P.M. Mr. E. T. Kenney called generally with reference to his riding wanting to know about the portion of road from Kitwanga to Hazelton. I said we had been hoping that the Federal Government would do it but it rather looked now as though, with the Japanese situation as it was, that they would not spend any further money. He produced a letter Mr. Crerar had sent to Mr. Olaf Hanson saying just exactly that. I suggested that he had better, if he wanted the project gone ahead with, see the Premier and if the Premier was prepared to put up the money he could be assured we would very rapidly do the work.

Mr. Kenney brought up a problem that disturbed me somewhat when he said that our Department had taken a gravel truck from New Westminster, rented it to the Department of Mines & Resources up in his district and it is being used at a place known as Shames - Licence No. S-321. He was very annoyed to think that we should do that when we needed trucks in the worst way. I said I knew nothing about it but would certainly find out. He asked if we could give him two new trucks and a small shovel for filling the trucks. I told him I was not sure that we could buy dump trucks, but he said that would not matter if we gave him ordinary trucks they could put the bodies on them up there and put them to work.

2:00 P.M. Mr. E. V. Finland came in and said that I had suggested in a letter that if he came in I would answer his request about the West Coast Road, which was not in our road plan. I said that the plan had been predicated on the idea that the Federal Government would be more likely to give us substantial assistance on developing the main roads around the Province and putting them into shape, than they would be in opening up new territory. That is why it was not in the plan. He asked what I thought would happen to the road and I said I could see no reason in the future - if the Province had the money, materials and men at some time - why it should not be opened up, but that was all I could say now.

I referred to a letter I had received from a Mr. S. R. Moore of Colwood advising that he had written to Mr. Finland, and he (Mr. Finland) showed me a letter he had got and it was in reference to trees being torn down in that district, and that he wanted some taken down and asked that we