

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Minister of Fisheries): This report is in the hands of the printers. I am afraid I was overoptimistic in my estimate of when it would be available. It is not yet ready, and in the circumstances perhaps the hon. member would be agreeable to having the motion stand.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): I am quite agreeable to having it stand. I am equally agreeable to having it passed, because the minister does not have to comply with this motion tomorrow. Let the minister do whatever he wishes.

Mr. Speaker: Does the minister insist that the motion stand? It is the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

COLUMBIA RIVER—DEVELOPMENT OF HYDRO RESOURCES

Motion No. 27—Mr. Herridge:

For a copy of all telegrams, reports, correspondence and other documents exchanged between the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources or any officials of his department and the government of British Columbia, the officials of any corporation or other persons, regarding the development of the hydro resources of the Columbia river in Canada.

PENSION VESTING FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES

Motion No. 28—Mr. Herridge:

For a copy of all telegrams, correspondence or other documents exchanged between the Minister of Finance or any officials of his department and any officers of any trade union with respect to pension vesting for income tax purposes.

He said: With the permission of the house I should like to withdraw these two motions, because I omitted to include the dates, and I do not want to go back to confederation. This was caused by the influx of a bevy of ladies into my office while I was dictating the motion.

Orders discharged and motions withdrawn.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

INQUIRY AS TO MEETING WITH NEW U.S. PRESIDENT

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether during his visit to Washington he expects to be able to meet with the incoming president of the United States or any member of the new administration.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Desirable as that would be, I think the Leader of the Opposition will realize the difficulty of arranging any such meeting at

the present time, in view of the fact that the inauguration ceremony takes place in a matter of two days thereafter. It would be almost impossible to arrange such a meeting. However, my hope is that at an early date following the inauguration of the new president an opportunity will arise which will permit discussion between President Kennedy and myself regarding matters of general interest to our two countries.

LAOS—REASSEMBLING OF SUPERVISORY COMMISSION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Is the minister in a position to tell the house what the policy of the government of Canada is regarding the reactivation of the truce supervisory commission in the troubled situation in Laos, particularly in the light of the published views of the governments of the United Kingdom, France and the United States? When the minister is replying, could he also tell the house whether or not Canada is included among the 14 countries which Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia has suggested as potential participants in a proposed conference to deal with the matters originally discussed in 1954 in Geneva?

Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have a short statement here with regard to the position in Laos. The Canadian government has been very much concerned about this situation. We have been doing our best to help work out a satisfactory solution. If the hon. member who raised this question has read press reports to the effect that the countries he has mentioned have agreed on a definite position, he is quite wrong, because this whole situation is being negotiated.

Canada's direct concern in this matter arises from our membership in the international commission for supervision and control in Laos which was established by the Geneva conference of 1954. As the hon. member for Essex East knows, Canada did not participate in that conference but together with India and Poland was named to a supervisory truce commission. It will be recalled that the international supervisory commission adjourned *sine die* in July, 1958 following two requests by the Laotian government for its departure. I have seen the suggestion made that this commission was adjourned at Canada's insistence, but the insistence came from the Laotian government, and the adjournment was approved by Canada and India, being a majority of the nations on the truce supervisory commission.