

Columbia River Treaty

lumbia also agreed. If that project included some objectionable features—but I do not believe such is the case—then some day it would be that province which would suffer. But since it is in favour of that treaty and since the headwaters of the Columbia river are located in that province, although it flows into the United States, we ought to support British Columbia and ratify as soon as possible that treaty, in order that work could start and the long awaited results might materialize.

[Text]

Mr. Reg. Cantelon (Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, the two previous speakers said they intended to be brief and I intend to be brief too. There is just one main point I hope to make. This treaty has been a subject of very violent debate in the past and, as we have seen this evening, the violence of the debate is not entirely ended. Nevertheless I now believe that it is the best treaty which could be negotiated under the circumstances. Of course the applicable circumstances were created by the government of British Columbia which owns the resource.

As has been pointed out on other occasions by other speakers, the Liberal party, while in opposition and while the treaty was being negotiated by the Conservatives, opposed the treaty with very strong attacks on the negotiators as being incompetent, and on the treaty as a selling out of the interests of Canadians. However, once the Liberals came to power they did a right about face and now maintain that it is the best treaty possible. It seems to me in the face of this, and with the two main parties of the country now supporting the treaty, that one can be sure that it is indeed the best treaty possible, and so I intend to support it.

Nevertheless there is one question that as a Saskatchewan member I believe needs clarification. Are the water diversion rights of the three prairie provinces protected by the treaty? The chief negotiators of the treaty, Hon. Davie Fulton for the Conservatives who negotiated the original treaty, and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) for the Liberals, who negotiated the protocol, maintain that the water diversion rights are adequately established. General McNaughton is their chief opponent and the main critic of the treaty. Yet he took a leading part in negotiating the treaty as it is today. He says that he opposed the final draft and refused to join in recommending it to the cabinet.

[Mr. Laprise.]

Mr. Fulton says that the general was at the final meeting and never had a word to say against the treaty. I should like to quote in substantiation of this opinion the *Ottawa Citizen* of May 12, 1964, where John Walker of Southam news services reports as follows:

But Mr. Fulton was most emphatic on this point, however, saying that he had asked all those on the negotiating team whether the treaty as drafted—including the high Arrow dam to which General McNaughton has taken strong exception and excluding the McNaughton dams on the upper reaches of the Columbia river—should be recommended.

"All agreed. General McNaughton said that while he was opposed strongly to certain of the physical aspects of the treaty, he did not oppose the recommendation to cabinet. He then said something to the effect that he must maintain his freedom of expression for the future".

Mr. Fulton then made a strong attack on the major criticisms which have been raised against the treaty. He reviewed the communications between Ottawa and the B.C. government before signing of the treaty to show that the B.C. government had given "the clearest and most unequivocal assurance" of its intent to proceed with the treaty as drafted, only to indulge in "a surprising contortion" a month later.

The former member from Kamloops, rubbing in the former McNaughton stand, stated in his 30 page brief that "at every stage the views of General McNaughton and the Canadian section, international joint commission, were obtained; and at no stage did they or General McNaughton withdraw or refrain from the discussions."

And further:

Mr. Fulton insisted, despite General McNaughton and others, that "the present treaty is far from a second best choice. It is, on the basis on which it was negotiated, a completely fair alternative."

He argued that without the treaty plan the development of the Columbia river would not have been possible at all. Once this was possible it would provide the "springboard" for further developments on the Canadian side.

He lashed out at those, like General McNaughton, who had told the committee that "despite the black and white provisions" in the treaty (for diversions, for instance), Canada would not exercise them. The right to divert the Columbia to the prairies—

To me this is the important point I want to make.

—or to divert the Kootenay, or to divert the Columbia into the Fraser, were all possible either immediately or in the long run.

From this it is quite plain that Mr. Fulton is confident that, first this is the best treaty that could be negotiated and, second, that water diversion rights for the prairies are protected. The Secretary of State for External Affairs corroborates Mr. Fulton's opinion. In his report to the external affairs committee he had this to say near the beginning of his