External Affairs
Supplementary Paper

No. 54/1 HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROGRESS IN CANADA, 1953

Statement issued on January 4, 1954, by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources

Although a tremendous amount of hydro-electric construction was under way in Canada in 1953, the amount of capacity brought into operation during the year was somewhat lower than that of recent years, although still appreciably above that of the pre-war period. New capacity in 1953 amounted to 638,012 h.p., bringing the total capacity of all water-power plants in Canada to 14,921,459 h.p., the net increase for the year being somewhat reduced by plant write-offs and list corrections. Plants and extensions under construction for operation in 1954 total 1,500,000 h.p. and those for later years about the same amount; also plans are being made covering other large developments. Projects completed and under construction are widely distributed throughout the country, a number of them being located in rather remote districts.

Although water power continues to be the predominant source of electrical energy in Canada, an appreciable amount is also produced by thermal stations, and a number of thermal units of large capacity were brought into operation and others were under construction in 1953.

Total power consumption in 1953 was about seven per cent above 1952 but, generally speaking, all demands were being serviced although little reserve capacity was available. Some relief from the effect of peak loads was achieved by the completion of important interconnections between independent generating systems.

In the field of power distribution, construction also was very active, with new main transmission lines being completed or under construction in several parts of the country, large substations being built, and secondary lines extended.

An outline of the year's activities in each province, principally in regard to hydro-electric central-station construction, is given below.

British Columbia

The British Columbia Power Commission completed the installation of the final two units each of 28,000 h.p. in the John Hart development on the Campbell River, Vancouver Island, bringing total capacity to 168,000 h.p. To provide additional storage for this development, surveys and drilling were carried out at Buttle Lake for a dam to be built in 1954. The Commission has undertaken the re-development of