

Supply—Northern Affairs

Saskatchewan who read the article in the *Western Producer*. Letters of this kind continue to come in.

We wish to see the Columbia developed in the national, provincial and local interest. The people whom I represent—and they are people supporting all parties—are sincere about this matter. I might explain that the members of these committees who are doing this work are, with one or two exceptions, persons who will not be flooded out or who will not suffer material damage or inconvenience because of the proposed building of the High Arrow dam, but are persons who are long time residents and competent engineers in various fields who know the impact this will have on our civilization on the Arrow lakes.

As to the forest industry, we have no idea, Mr. Chairman, what this will do. There has been no assessment. We have no estimate in that direction of the millions of dollars of extra costs that will be imposed on the forest industry, as well as the destruction of some of the finest land in British Columbia. One farmer wrote recently that he had \$1,500 gross income per year per acre. This land is located where we grow peaches and high cost agricultural products, where there is intensified farming. There is also the matter of the disruption of public facilities, investment in wharfs and things of that sort.

This is an appeal on my part on behalf of the people I represent. I am getting letters from a good many parts of British Columbia now. This is an appeal that we take advantage of this delay, that we reconsider this whole question in order to secure a modification of the treaty so that we have a low Arrow dam instead of this High Arrow dam. There is no objection to a low Arrow dam, except that there would possibly be some protest from the United States having regard to the fact that the High Arrow dam is of great advantage to them. It can store water in great quantities and very quickly.

However, in the national interest and in the interests of the people whom I have the honour to represent, and who write me so continually about this problem about which they are so greatly concerned, I ask that we use this period of delay to reconsider this whole problem and work for a modification of the treaty so that it will provide us with power and development without unnecessary destruction of British Columbia's natural resources.

The Chairman: Shall vote 291 carry?

Mr. Pearson: No, Mr. Chairman. We have listened in the committee with some interest, I think, to the statement just made by the hon. member for Kootenay West with regard

to the Columbia development treaty. I should like to say a few words about this matter, especially in view of the confused situation that now exists as to whether this treaty will or will not be brought before parliament this session.

Yesterday we learned from the Minister of Justice that there could be no assurance that this work would be done in 1961. However, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, being more exuberant and less cautious than the Minister of Justice, has issued from his department a booklet which deals with capital investment projects in Canada in 1961. In it he makes the flat statement that the work will begin or is to begin—I think that is the expression used—in 1961.

It is rather important to know which of these ministers is correct in his assumption, because this is one of the most important international arrangements for the development of Canada that has ever been entered into by a Canadian government. One may have differing views about the relative advantages to Canada and to the United States of the contents of this arrangement, but there can be no difference of opinion over its importance in the development of British Columbia and indeed of the whole country.

The negotiations leading up to this treaty began many years ago, of course, and the preliminary studies, the engineering and technical studies, which I think began in 1943 took many years to complete, if indeed they are completed now. It was, of course, quite impossible to work out a diplomatic arrangement, a formal international treaty between the two countries, or indeed to discuss these diplomatic arrangements until the preliminary technical and engineering surveys by the joint commission had been completed. That was not done, I believe, until—the Minister of Justice will know the date—some time in 1954 or 1955. Anyway, they were not completed until well into the 1950's.

When the discussions took place between representatives of the two governments, initially through the international joint commission, there were many difficulties, of course, which were encountered before an agreement could be reached. Perhaps the most important difficulty in the earlier stages of the discussions was that concerned with the sharing of downstream benefits. I recall that when this matter was before the international joint commission some years ago the position taken by the United States side of the joint commission was such as to make agreement virtually impossible, largely over a difference of opinion on this question of sharing downstream benefits. I think all Canadians must be very grateful to General