

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

it must be for the purpose of bargaining. But whatever be the purpose, whatever be the position that they now take outwardly, the facts are as I have outlined them; that we signed the treaty with British Columbia's knowledge and approval, and it is inconceivable in the light of those facts that there should be any fundamental change of position on the part of the provincial government.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, all I can say now, and I am sure the house and every member present will agree with me, is that what is desirable at this time is that there should be early formal approval of this treaty by British Columbia so that ratification can take place, construction can commence at the earliest possible moment and all the benefits in terms of low cost power, stimulus to the economy and millions of man hours of direct employment, as well as the indirect employment in production that will be necessary, can go forward at the earliest possible moment.

I have just one final word. I have sometimes been concerned by the implications of what is being said in British Columbia to the effect that somehow or other there were not adequate engineering and economic analyses of the treaty provisions before it was signed. The federal government alone, Mr. Chairman, has spent over \$4½ million on engineering and economic studies of the Columbia river. This is quite apart from what the Americans have spent, what British Columbia has spent and what private concerns have spent. Engineers are great experts and very important people and maybe their services come high, but you can still buy a heck of a lot of engineering for \$4½ million. Therefore I must reject out of hand any suggestion, from wherever it comes, that we rushed into this treaty without adequate engineering or economic studies and analyses.

As I have said, some engineering naturally remains to be done, and it is important engineering. It is the kind of engineering that will determine the precise physical location of dams. I am not suggesting for one moment that such engineering is not required, but what I do say quite definitely is that for the purposes of a treaty of this kind—and I am confirmed in my view by comparison with what was done on the St. Lawrence river—every reasonable, and indeed more than reasonable, completely adequate preliminary engineering and economic studies and analyses were made. The government of Canada is satisfied as to the position it took and the information it had as a result of those studies. The government of Canada remains ready to go forward immediately with the ratification of the treaty and the commencement of construction of the project.

[Mr. Fulton.]

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to hold up this estimate very long. The minister has made a statement on which I should like to make a short comment. I do not quarrel with his recital of the facts or challenge them in any way. He and the federal government felt they had every reason to believe that the provincial government of British Columbia had been associated with these negotiations leading up to the treaty, that they were kept informed of the developments, that they knew all about the negotiations and, indeed, had participated in them, and therefore he feels that the government had the right to assume that the resulting treaty was acceptable to the government of British Columbia whose co-operation in carrying it out, as I said this morning, is absolutely essential.

The fact is, however, that so far as one can gather that this provincial government does not feel committed at this time to the acceptance of all the proposals, all the implications of the treaty, and further negotiations are under way. I also do not quarrel with what the minister has said about the fact that the international obligation undertaken by Canada in the signature of an important treaty of this kind does not come into effect until the treaty is ratified and the treaty, in accordance with our constitutional practice, will not be ratified until it has been considered by the House of Commons. Nevertheless the fact remains that this treaty cannot be submitted to this parliament for consideration at this time because of the absence of an arrangement with British Columbia.

This procedure is in contrast to that which was followed in the negotiation of the St. Lawrence seaway agreement. When that agreement was negotiated with the United States—and I have the treaty before me—the treaty of 1941 was signed by representatives of the government of Canada, namely Mr. King, Mr. Howe, and Mr. Reed, and representatives of the government of the United States, namely, Mr. Moffat, Mr. Berle and Mr. Olds, on March 19, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and forty one. On that very same day an agreement was signed between the government of Canada and the government of the province of Ontario which was necessary to the implementation of this international agreement.

Therefore once the international agreement was ratified there was in existence a signed agreement between the government of Canada and the government of the province of Ontario which made it possible to implement the international arrangement. That agreement was signed by Mr. King, Mr. Howe, Mr. Hepburn and Mr. Nixon. The