

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

was no main road and where it was not normally possible to see it, so I could get a very good view of it.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I ask the Prime Minister again, does he think he was justified in doing that at the Prime Minister's house?

**Mr. Pearson:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, entirely justified.

**POWER****COLUMBIA RIVER—TELEGRAM FROM GROUP OF ENGINEERS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister received a petition signed by 19 Canadian engineers who attended the recent annual meeting of the Engineering Institute of Canada, urging that in view of the serious differences of opinion that exist with respect to the Columbia river treaty, before the government commits the country to an irrevocable course of development it take further steps to ensure beyond reasonable doubt that this treaty will serve the best interests of Canada now and in the future? Would the Prime Minister inform the house of his reply to these distinguished engineers?

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, this is an important question and it deserves a detailed reply. It is true that on Monday morning of this week I did receive the telegram to which my hon. friend has referred, attributed to a group of very distinguished Canadian engineers and asking that "steps should be taken to ensure beyond reasonable doubt that any treaty on the Columbia truly serves the best interests of Canada now and in the future".

On Tuesday I sent a reply to the originator of the telegram and addressed copies to all the other engineers named in the telegram. The same day I received the following telegram from one of the most distinguished persons on the list, the president of Calgary Power, Mr. G. H. Thompson:

I have received a copy of your telegram to Dr. L. Austin Wright in reply to his telegram to you of May 31 regarding the Columbia river treaty. Having noted from your reply the thorough study already given to this treaty I would request that my name be deleted from those listed in Dr. Wright's telegram to you.

Yesterday I received a telegram from another distinguished person on the list, namely

[Mr. Pearson.]

Mr. J. B. Sterling, chancellor of Queen's University and a former past president of the Engineering Institute of Canada. The following is the text of his message:

Thanks your telegram June 2 re Columbia treaty. Regret did not have complete information last week and now withdraw completely any objection.

This morning I received a somewhat longer telegram from Mr. P. M. Sauder of Lethbridge, Alberta, whose name was also listed on the original telegram. Mr. Sauder begins his telegram by saying:

I do not understand how I got involved in the discussion of the Columbia river treaty, while I talked with Dr. Austin Wright I do not remember discussing this subject with anybody at the Banff meeting of the Engineering Institute of Canada.

Mr. Sauder goes on to raise some question about possible diversions for consumptive uses on which I have commented to him in a telegram this morning. I do not know what further messages may come in on this matter, as I understand that many of those whose names were listed in the original telegram have not yet arrived at their homes after the conclusion of the Banff meeting. It seems clear, however, that in general the signers of the telegram were expressing their interest in this important subject. As indicated in my reply to them, the government and many outstanding engineering authorities who testified before the external affairs committee are satisfied that the existing treaty and protocol will serve the best interests of Canada now and in the future.

**Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Prime Minister has read a number of telegrams, but I do not believe he has read the one containing his reply to the original telegram.

**Mr. Pearson:** It might be desirable if I tabled the original telegram, my reply and any telegrams that have come in in reply to my reply. I would be glad to do that tomorrow.

**Mr. Douglas:** Except for the fact that telegrams from various engineers have already been quoted by the Prime Minister, and it seems to me that the record should also contain the Prime Minister's reply.

**Mr. Pearson:** I will be glad to table all telegrams that have come in later in the day when I will get them in my office.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** There are some more coming in now.