

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

government of Canada and of British Columbia. As well, during the course of negotiations we set up an international work group consisting of representatives of Canada and the United States, technical advisers from our two countries, to work together on the technical data that were arising and being considered in the course of our negotiations so that we might have agreed facts and figures between the two countries in order that the negotiators would have a sound and agreed base on which to carry out their negotiations. Again British Columbia had representatives on that international work group processing all the facts and figures, all the engineering data and the economic analyses and so on that were being put before the negotiators to work on.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, it is surely clear that at every stage and at every level British Columbia knew and approved of what was being done.

And so we come to the reporting of the treaty itself. Early in January the negotiators reached agreement on the terms of the treaty we should recommend, and we reported to our governments accordingly. British Columbia of course knew about the terms of the treaty because they had a member on the negotiating team, Mr. Bassett who signed our unanimous report. But as chairman of the Canadian negotiating team I felt it only proper to give the government of British Columbia formal advice of the treaty that we would be recommending, and I did so. I sent an authentic copy to Mr. Williston, as British Columbia co-chairman of the policy liaison committee, and reminded him of the circumstances of the negotiations to which I have just referred, that is the extent to which British Columbia had been associated, and approved of what we were doing. I stated that under those circumstances they, of course, had knowledge of what was in the treaty but that I was sending him a copy for his official information. I advised him on January 9 that the government of Canada in considering the treaty would act on the assumption that British Columbia was in accord with its terms. I also advised him that, if approved, we would sign it on January 16, and that under all these circumstances we would assume that the government of British Columbia approved the signing of the treaty unless I heard from him to the contrary. I did not hear to the contrary, so the treaty was signed with the knowledge and approval of the government of British Columbia. Every word, every phrase, every clause, every provision, every annex, every implication of that treaty had been exhaustively discussed with and approved by British Columbia before the treaty was signed.

Perhaps I should point out that at the very end, when it came to the actual drafting of the treaty, when the negotiators sat down to write out in formal language the effects of our agreement, we then had associated with us as an adviser the deputy attorney general of British Columbia, who attended the session at which the treaty was being drafted by the negotiators. So, sir, it is an incontrovertible fact that everything that is in the treaty, every implication that is contained therein, was known to and approved by the government of British Columbia before the treaty was signed.

So we are now in the position that what remains to be settled are the details of the agreement between Canada and British Columbia as to the implementation of the treaty, responsibility for construction and operation and so on. It is, of course, understood and was always understood that there were some final engineering matters to be settled before ratification. The actual physical sites of the dams have to be settled. This can only be done by engineering studies which are going forward now. This has to be settled before applications can be made for permits to build the dam. It was well understood that these things would require some little time to settle before we could formally ratify the treaty by the exchange of instruments of ratification, as provided for therein.

If delay was sought by British Columbia on this basis alone there would be no misunderstanding. I am concerned, however, because the delay which is taking place and the positions which are being adopted by British Columbia appear to be suggestive of differences or difficulties certainly wider than the mere desire to establish the final details of engineering such as the actual, precise, physical location of the dams.

However, Mr. Chairman, I have taken the position before, and I think I should take it again, that in view of the circumstances I have outlined, in view of the extent to which there was unanimity between Canada and British Columbia, and in view of the knowledge, consent and approval by British Columbia of this treaty, it is incomprehensible and inconceivable to me that British Columbia should really change its position. I think all of us must proceed on the assumption that, this having been the situation, this having been the agreement, there can be no reversal of position on the part of British Columbia, and that they will agree with us that the treaty should be ratified and should go into effect.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks this afternoon, I am unable to account for some of the things they have said and some of the positions they have taken, except that