

Dominion-Provincial Relations

Resources. Has the government made any progress in its discussions with the United States regarding downstream benefits on international rivers since I last mentioned this subject in the house on December 3?

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the progress on the Columbia river project, to which I suppose the hon. member is referring—

Mr. Lesage: Downstream benefits.

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle):—and which involves many matters in addition to downstream benefits, we have received the engineering reports and we are now engaged in making an economic study of those reports.

Mr. Lesage: A supplementary question. Have there been any dealings between the government of Canada and the government of the United States regarding the question of the payment for downstream benefits on the Columbia river and elsewhere since May 20 last?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Lesage: Will the minister not tell us what those dealings have been?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, I think the house will readily understand that when discussions of this sort are going on it is not customary to keep everyone informed of every move that is being made. I have mentioned earlier in my answers to the hon. member that in the public interest it is of advantage to keep these things to ourselves while negotiations are in progress.

Mr. Lesage: Mr. Speaker, when I occupied the post the hon. gentleman now occupies I always replied—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has received an answer, and I have no power to ask anything different to be done.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Will the minister inform the house as soon as there are any definite conclusions from these negotiations with the United States?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): Yes I think that is a fair question, Mr. Speaker, and I will be glad to do that.

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF LETTER TO PREMIER OF NEWFOUNDLAND

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the minister of northern affairs if he is now in a

position to table the letter he sent to the premier of Newfoundland refusing to make the amendment he asked for.

Hon. Alvin Hamilton (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pickersgill: Could it be tabled today and included in *Hansard* as an appendix, as is usual in the case of correspondence with provincial governments?

Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle): I think, Mr. Speaker, my staff will have it available by tomorrow.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

INQUIRY AS TO SUPPLEMENTARY WINTER WORK PROGRAM

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Transport. Has the minister yet received a reply from the Canadian Pacific Railway with respect to his appeal to the railways of Canada to step up their winter work programs?

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I received the following reply from the assistant to the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Mr. D. M. George, which reads as follows:

Dear Mr. Hees:

In the absence of the president, who is out of the city this week and will not return to the office until Monday, I acknowledge your letter dated January 17, dealing with the question of employment, which was received on the 22nd.

The matter is receiving careful study by our people, and Mr. Crump will write you early next week.

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

MEASURE TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ATLANTIC PROVINCES, ETC.

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): moved the second reading of Bill No. 247, to amend the Federal-Provincial Tax-Sharing Arrangements Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this measure has already been under discussion during the resolution stage for two full days, and I think all aspects of the matter have been very fully explored by this time. The measure is a brief one, and it carries out the twofold approach to the problem of dominion-provincial fiscal relations indicated in the resolution.

The first aspect of the bill is that the Atlantic adjustment grant, arrived at on the basis of a formula concurred in by all the provinces affected, and arrived at by a procedure which was fully contemplated at the November dominion-provincial conference, is reflected in