

Columbia River Agreement Signed

made reference to the fact that the treaty would be referred to the external affairs committee, but it appears that the substance of the treaty is going to be referred to the external affairs committee after the fact, when there is an agreement with the government of British Columbia and after agreement has been reached with the government of the United States.

Many Canadians are concerned about the outcome of the discussions between the government of Canada and the government of British Columbia. They are concerned about the developments with respect to the coming renegotiation of the treaty with the government of the United States. Before final dealings with the government of British Columbia and the government of the United States we trust that the federal government will peruse first the speeches made in the house last session by the hon. member for Coast-Capilano (Mr. Davis) and the hon. member for Kootenay East (Mr. Byrne). Second, we trust it will remember that the Liberal party organization in Kootenay West invited General McNaughton to be their candidate in the last election because, as members told me, they supported his point of view, and the candidate who did run in the last election opposed the treaty and expressed strong criticism of some of its terms. Third, I trust that the government will also remember the newspaper articles written by the hon. member for Coast-Capilano during the last election campaign.

I must remind the minister that the trade union movement in British Columbia has expressed its solid opposition to the terms of the present treaty and its solid support for the proposals made by General McNaughton. I must remind the minister that the advisory board of the farmers' institutes of British Columbia have taken a similar stand, as well as many other organizations and groups. I am not going to take the time of the house to refer to all of them. I just want to re-emphasize the rank and file opinion in British Columbia. In addition, the leader of the Liberal party in British Columbia has expressed support for General McNaughton's views and has criticized the present treaty and urged renegotiation and changes in accord with the response expressed by the audience he was addressing.

In addition, the western Canada reclamation association at its annual meeting in Kelowna on June 21—it is an organization composed of organizations in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan—urged the federal government not to sign the Columbia river treaty with the United States, and many delegates expressed in the strongest terms

[Mr. Herridge.]

their support for General McNaughton's statements on this question. Also, only a few days ago the government of Saskatchewan expressed its concern with the terms of the present treaty. I have been told that on the radio this morning the premier of British Columbia used some language when criticizing the government of Saskatchewan that would be used by southerners under other circumstances.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of this party and the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who are concerned with developments in respect of this treaty, as well as a substantial number of organizations in British Columbia and other parts of Canada, I urge—

Mr. Thompson: Speak for yourself.

Mr. Herridge: I would not be here if I were speaking just for myself. Let me say, in reply to the leader of the Social Credit party, that the only candidate who supported this treaty without criticism was at the bottom of the polls in Kootenay West, and that was the Social Credit candidate.

I urge, Mr. Speaker, that the present Columbia treaty be referred to the external affairs committee so that engineers, representatives of labour, farm and other organizations, chambers of commerce and resource committees can present their views and give evidence before any final agreement is reached with the government of British Columbia or renegotiation is undertaken with the government of the United States. I must urge the Prime Minister at this time to remember his promise in writing to numerous organizations and individuals in British Columbia that no Liberal government would come to a final decision with regard to this treaty before the interested parties were consulted.

If this treaty is submitted to the external affairs committee after agreement has been reached with the United States, I say frankly the Prime Minister has not kept the promise he made in writing to these people. We urge submission of this treaty to the external affairs committee before any agreement is reached with the government of the United States so that the Canadian people can be given an opportunity to become acquainted with the facts. The more they know of the facts the more they will realize what a serious situation this presents to all Canadians, and to the people of British Columbia in particular.

There is a precedent for this course, and I will give the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Robichaud) credit for establishing it. He has agreed that the north Pacific fisheries treaty will be referred to the committee on marine and fisheries prior to the government coming to a final conclusion on any agreement with the