

*Supply—Northern Affairs*

I have received an interesting letter from Sacramento, California, from Lieutenant-Colonel George Anthony, retired, who is a registered professional electrical engineer, and whose life work has been in the management of power systems and resources studies in the United States. He just retired from the United States service; otherwise he could not write me this letter. In his lengthy letter he had this to say:

There may be occasions (and this appears to be one) where political expediency will magnify marginal benefits out of all proportion to their worth, in an effort to justify an otherwise uneconomic international agreement. If successful and if the costs are carefully hidden, the success may add some glamour to giant storage systems and power pools, while the property owners along the Arrow lakes take the beating. Also, the public will be denied the right to enjoy one of the most scenic and most beautiful natural lakes yet untouched by a questionable economic power philosophy.

Then again in 1959 Hon. Ray Williston, minister of lands and forests for the province of British Columbia, gave the assurance at a public meeting in Nelson—I have listened to the tape recording of that address—that the Kootenay district would benefit directly from this development. However, in a letter the minister wrote later to the secretary of the associated chambers of commerce of southeastern British Columbia, he suggested the only benefits the Kootenays might expect from the Columbia treaty would be those accruing to the area as a result of the building of the dams, or other construction. In fact I have the minutes of the meeting of the associated chambers of commerce of southeastern British Columbia, dated February 25, 1961. In these minutes is a comment on the minister's letter, as follows:

It was pointed out that our association's official position is opposition to High Arrow storage dam unless proven beneficial to southeastern British Columbia. A letter, dated December 2, 1960, from the minister of lands and forests indicates that, other than the building boom, no benefits will accrue to this area.

When speaking in reply to a question asked by me in the house on March 2, the Minister of Justice said, as reported in *Hansard* of March 3, at page 2622:

A reference to the treaty and the annexes will show that the utmost precision possible at this stage has been introduced for the determination of precisely these matters at the only time they can be determined with complete certainty—

This in effect means that the Minister of Justice considered that the necessary and essential facts were known before the treaty was signed. However, in contrast the British Columbia energy board has stated, and I quote from their report—

The British Columbia energy board recommends delay in the signing of any agreement with the [Mr. Herridge.]

government of Canada because certain aspects of each project require clarification before realistic cost estimates can be established.

Another contradiction. What about the cost of power? The Minister of Justice, in his speech before the Canadian club in Montreal from which I quoted previously, said:

With the treaty we can embark immediately on a tremendous series of developments which, taken together, will produce, not only initially but over many years to come, a greater quantity of power at lower cost than is available from any other presently known source.

But what has Mr. Williston, the British Columbia minister of lands and forests, said about this? When speaking to the legislature on February 8 this year he said:

I should like to emphasize that the present agreement with the United States will not provide an abundance of cheap electricity at this time, and that the agreement between the federal and provincial governments will not be ratified for some time.

Another contradiction. Incidentally, Mr. Chairman, I might mention at this point that last fall, when speaking in Nelson, the minister of lands and forests of British Columbia said that speed was essential in the development of the Columbia. When speaking to a public meeting in Castlegar, as reported in the *Trail Times* on September 6, 1960, Mr. Williston criticized the C.C.F. policy with respect to bringing the British Columbia Electric under public ownership, and said:

Taking over the B.C. Electric would not provide cheap electricity because the B.C. Electric hasn't got any cheap electricity.

Then he went on further to say, and I quote again from the *Trail Times* of the same date:

The first cheap electrical energy we are going to have is that which will come from the Columbia River development.

Now Mr. Williston tells a different story. Another contradiction. Again, only a few weeks ago we read in the press that Mr. Bennett is giving consideration to bringing the B.C. Electric under public ownership. After Mr. Williston's statement in Castlegar on this question, this appears like another contradiction. Speaking in Castlegar, as reported in the *Trail Times* on the same date, Mr. Williston said:

The High Arrow dam would not be built until public hearings had been held under the water rights act; that the High Arrow dam would never be built if the preponderance of evidence produced at these hearings shows the project not to be in the best interests of British Columbia and Canada, and that no agreement would be signed with the Americans or anyone else until public hearings had been held.

Well, what has happened? All hon. members know that no public hearings under the water rights act have been held. You all know that the treaty has been signed regardless of Mr. Williston's promise that no