

Columbia River Treaty

On March 3 I moved that the Columbia river treaty and protocol should be referred to the standing committee on external affairs. The committee reported, as I have just observed, on May 28 with a statement of clarity that I think deserves to be repeated. The substantive part of the report says:

Your committee has considered and approved the abovementioned treaty and protocol.

In moving the present resolution, which is based on the committee's report, I would hope to be brief because I made an extended statement when this matter first came before the house and I made two statements in the committee. My remarks will be brief because the entire situation relating to the treaty and the protocol has been set forth fully and in detail. In addition, all hon. members, those on the committee and those who are not, received the white paper which set forth the relevant documents. All hon. members, have also received the "Presentation", a book of 172 pages giving a complete background and explanation of the negotiations, the arrangements finally concluded and the advantages that flow from them. I made a thorough survey of the whole matter in my statement on March 3, and again in concluding the debate on the motion to send the document to the committee on March 9. I believe this house had a useful debate on the entire treaty arrangement and the changes made by the protocol.

The committee on external affairs has examined the Columbia river treaty with a thoroughness that has been accorded, I believe, to very few subjects in the history of this parliament. It held, as I observed a moment ago, 50 meetings between April 7 and May 21, and its proceedings, up to the last issue I have received, cover some 1,407 pages. In addition, briefs have been received and witnesses have been heard and cross-examined; indeed, every aspect of this great plan has been examined, checked, assessed and set forth. There is, it seems to me, little that need now be said.

The critics of the treaty have been heard and their arguments have been probed with care. In my statement to the committee on May 21 I summarized and commented on the points that have been made by those who criticize the treaty and the protocol. All the arguments dealt with questions that had been raised in one way or another before or while the protocol was under negotiation. All were weighed then with care, and all have been examined again. They do not in any way alter the judgment which I, as the responsible

minister, and the government as a whole had made. In my statement of May 21 I gave the reasons why the arguments of the critics cannot be accepted as in any way invalidating the case that has been presented on the outstanding advantages of the two instruments concerned. In the statement which I made in this house on May 3, 1964, I summarized them as follows:

1. We will be able to instal over 4 million kilowatts of capacity at points in the Columbia river basin in Canada capable of producing annually about 20 billion kilowatt hours of energy for Canada at an at-site cost of approximately two mills per kilowatt hour. This installed capacity is nearly one and a half times the total present hydroelectric installation in British Columbia and about one fifth the total for all of Canada, all at the very low cost of two mills.

2. We will secure prevention of floods in settled areas on the Kootenay and Columbia rivers.

3. We will have the continued production, at the end of the 30 year sales contract, of downstream benefits in the United States with a potential value to British Columbia of \$5 million to \$10 million per year for the life of the treaty and possibly thereafter.

4. We will be entitled to additional payments of up to \$8 million by the United States for extra flood control if it is required during the treaty period.

5. Construction of the projects will require a peak labour force of about 3,000 men. An average of some 1,350 will be employed on the dams alone during the nine year construction period of the treaty storage projects. Expenditures by this labour force and by industries across Canada on the production of materials and equipment for the dams will create a great many more jobs.

6. Following the construction of Duncan, Arrow and Mica there will be a continuing building program for a further 10 to 15 years for other large dams on the Columbia river.

7. Canada will secure an increase in foreign exchange resources from the payment by the United States of \$319 million in United States funds, of which \$254 million will be paid in 1964.

These are tremendous advantages, Mr. Speaker. They cannot be secured except in a co-operative arrangement. It is quite clear that the cost of power would be much greater and the results to Canada infinitely less beneficial if we tried to develop the Columbia alone. No one seriously suggests this should be tried. It is equally clear, I think, that the arrangement worked out is no second best. Careful engineering studies show that the arrangement is better than any alternative sequence of development. This was clearly emphasized by all of the engineering experts who appeared before the committee and by all of the notable engineering firms represented before the committee; and I think I can say that nothing has been produced to

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]