

Columbia River Power

have since learned that this is an important anniversary for the Prime Minister, and we wish him well. There have been times in the past when I have thought his entry into the house was not an occasion for celebration, but we do wish him well on the occasion of achieving, in a parliamentary sense, his majority.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate this group with the remarks that have already been made in acknowledgement of the fact that today is the 21st anniversary of the election of the Prime Minister to the House of Commons. The Prime Minister has had a very important and distinguished political career in the house, and while we do not always agree with the statements he makes from time to time I think we can associate ourselves with others in wishing him well in the years to come.

As I recall the order of precedence, I believe I am right in saying there are only three members in the house who have been here longer than the Prime Minister. Although, as I have said, we do not agree with him very often on many controversial questions, I should like to say that the people of Saskatchewan take great pride in the fact that a person from that province has had such a very distinguished career in the House of Commons.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, may I say to the hon. member for Huron, the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Assiniboia how very deeply I appreciate what they have said.

POWER**COLUMBIA RIVER—REPORT ON MEETINGS WITH
B.C. PREMIER**

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the house might be interested in a brief report on the meetings I had in Victoria, B.C., on Friday and Saturday last with Premier Bennett concerning the financing of the Columbia river project.

I met with the premier on Friday morning, that meeting being attended only by the premier and myself. In the afternoon we had a further meeting in which one official on each side also participated, and I had a further opportunity for discussion with the premier more briefly on Saturday evening. The discussions were conducted in a very cordial atmosphere which enabled the exchanges to be carried on in a very candid manner.

I think the meetings did prove to be thoroughly useful. They covered very wide ground. It may be said that the discussion was comprehensive.

On my arrival on Thursday evening Premier Bennett presented me with a letter in which he set forth two alternative proposals. These two proposals, along with the federal government's proposal which I had submitted to the prime minister by a letter dated December 6, 1960, were very thoroughly discussed. The representatives of both governments, Mr. Speaker, declared their common purpose of bringing about the implementation of the project as quickly as possible. Further studies will be required in the light of the discussions. These may be expected to be followed in due course by further communications between the two governments. The desirability of the earliest possible commencement of work on the Columbia river project has been acknowledged by both governments.

For the convenience of the house, I should like to table the letter dated March 23 written to me by Prime Minister Bennett and to which are attached the alternative proposals which he submitted on behalf of the government of British Columbia, and also a copy of my letter to Prime Minister Bennett of December 6, 1960. This latter letter has already been brought to the attention of the house, I believe, but if there were any thought of having these communications printed as appendices to today's proceedings it might be convenient for hon. members to have both communications printed together.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house that the documents submitted by the Minister of Finance shall be printed as appendices to today's *Hansard*?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Editor's note: for text of letters referred to above, see appendix.*]

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): We on this side have listened with some interest to the minister's report on his recent visit to British Columbia and the steps he has taken on behalf of the federal government to clear up certain difficulties between the provincial and federal governments which stand in the way of consideration by this House of Commons of the Columbia river development treaty with the United States. Apparently these difficulties are to some extent financial, and to some extent arise out of certain doubts the British Columbia government has about some of the aspects of the treaty. It is unfortunate that these difficulties could not have been cleared up before the treaty was signed and which,