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| Terre- Neuve et Labrador | 33e  | 3e  | Discours du Trône | 27 janvier 1965 | Fabian O’Dea | Lieutenant Gouverneur | Liberal |

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Newfoundland shares the world's grief this week for the death of one who was probably the greatest man of our century. He was a friend to Newfoundland, and Newfoundland will be represented at his state funeral by the Premier of our Province.

My Ministers are deeply pleased, as 1 am sure you will be too, by the success that has attended the effort of the past three years to bring about the launching of a considerable programme for the development of our fisheries. The Government of Canada have taken the formal decision to join with my Government in bearing the costs of this development. The programme is to be carried out in a number of ways, and along a number of fronts; for admittedly the solution of the complex problems of the fishery, some of them of great duration, and all of them rooted in the very history of our Island, cannot be brought about by simple means. It is apparent that large sums of money will be needed for the purpose, as well as unusual energy and effort from many persons in the industry itself and in the Governments concerned. My Ministers are confident that the programme to be carried out by the Government of our country and by the Government of our Province will make great improvements in what is still the principal basic industry of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am sure that our fishermen, and indeed all others directly concerned with the fishing industry, have warmly welcomed the news of the fishery development programme. It will be generally agreed, 1 believe, that 1965 will be a fateful year in the long history of our great fisheries.

Newfoundlanders everywhere have received with joy the report of the eminent English company of electrical engineers, Messrs, Preece, Cardew and Rider, that it would be feasible to bring the prodigious electric energy of the Hamilton River watershed eastward through Labrador to the Strait of Belle Isle, by overground cables, across the Strait of Belle Isle by undersea cables to the northern tip of our Island and thence down the West Coast of our Island. This great reservoir of 9,000,000 horsepower of electric energy, which is probably the greatest single source of hydro power existing at anyone site, if brought to Newfoundland, and made available in very large blocks of power at low cost, should attract to our shores numbers of large and important industrial enterprises whose coming would represent a very great industrial advance for our Province. It is my Government's firm view that the power of Labrador, where it cannot be used within Labrador itself, must be brought to this Island in the first instance, and made easily and economically available for those who wish to use it on this Island. That, in my Government's view, is the first consideration. Any power that is surplus to Newfoundland's needs should be carried to our neighbours in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, who, we have reason to believe, will be happy to receive it. Four of Canada's ten Provinces, and precisely the four most urgently in need of development, would thus the first to share in the blessings of this cheapest of all power to be found anywhere in Canada. What is surplus to these four Provinces could most economically be delivered to the United States border. It is my Government's policy to have this power brought to Newfoundland in the first instance, and it is abundantly clear that this policy is not merely approved, but demanded, by the people. From its very foundation the British Newfoundland Corporation have had the respect and affection of the Government and people of this Province. All of the concessions and rights held by the Corporation have been given to them by your House and my Ministers. It has been, and continues to be, the strong desire of my Government that the Corporation carry out the mission entrusted to it. This means, with regard to Hamilton Falls power, that it is the British Newfoundland Corporation that should develop the power and transmit it and that they should do it in precisely the way that offers the maximum advantage to this Province. Hamilton Falls is the greatest material asset that this Province owns, and it is the bounden duty of all concerned to develop it in such a way as to give the greatest possible material gain to our Newfoundland and Labrador economy. Our people see in this gift that Providence has conferred upon them the one incomparable means of industrial greatness, and none should disregard this fact.

It may appear to be an anti-climax to refer to Bay d'Espoir power at this point, but this is far from being the case. The Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission are proceed­ing vigorously with the development of this source that exists here on the Island itself, and they intend to carry out my Govern­ment's programme of developing all of the hydro-electricity energy that remains to be developed on this Island. This consists of approximately 600,000 horsepower in the Bay d'Espoir area, and an additional 400,000 horsepower at other sites throughout the Island. The production and distribution of this 1,000,000 horsepower of new electric energy on the Island will fill all of our present domestic needs, and do so in a way that should make electricity available to our homes, churches, schools, commercial and industrial establishments, fishery and farming establishments and other places at a price that will encourage consumers to make use of very much more electricity than they have ever done before. My Ministers are convinced that the development of this power, the building of a network of transmission and distribution lines, and the sale of the elec­tricity at a price very much below the price at present prevail­ing, will induce all our families to use electricity not merely to illuminate their establishments and operate ordinary conveniences, but to heat them as well. One of the greatest blessings of this policy will be that of replacing such primitive means of light as the kerosene oil lamp, in hundreds of small and remote places, with low-cost electricity.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

My Government are making a very vigorous effort to complete the building of the Trans-Canada Highway before the conclusion of the present calendar year. Many contracts have been awarded, and many millions of dollars' worth of road building equipment put in use. Only the great generosity and vision of the Prime Minister of Canada, and of his colleagues, in offering to pay 90 % of the cost of doing it, has made the completion of the Trans-Canada Highway possible in Newfoundland in this remarkably short period of time. To finish the road under the 90-10 offer of the Government of Canada is costing approximately $75 million, of which the Canadian Government are paying $67 million. My Ministers have decided that they will avail themselves of this generous 90-10 offer to upgrade the earlier sections of the Trans-Canada Highway, and to spend an additional amount of $10 million to do so. Ninety percent of this, too, will be paid to us by the Government of Canada. It is a striking fact that the Trans-Canada Highway, when it is com­pleted this year, and the upgrading that I have mentioned has been completed as well, will have cost a grand total sum of over $130,000,000. It is admittedly one of the most useful of the many blessings that have been showered upon Newfound­land by Confederation with Canada.

Now that the completion of the Trans-Canada Highway itself is in sight, my Ministers have embarked upon a policy of increasing greatly the rate at which they are building other roads throughout the Province, and they have at the same time commenced a programme of paving many of our roads. As soon as the Trans-Canada Highway itself is finished my Ministers intend even more to increase the pace of this type of road construction and paving.

In the present day economy of Newfoundland one of the largest sectors is our fast-growing mining industry. It is unfortunately ­true that at Bell Island painful contraction has taken place, and that no one appears to be willing to forecast much if any improvement in that historic mine. In all other mining activities it is virtually an unbroken story of development and expansion. The mines at Buchans, Little Bay, Rambler and Baie Verte are moving steadily ahead; entirely new mines are about to open at Great Gull Lake and Whale's Back. The life of Tilt Cove, which was thought to be close to an end, has been somewhat lengthened and there is strong hope that additional ore reserves will be found still further to lengthen it. There are several other prospects of new mines on the Island of Newfoundland, but it is of course in Labrador that mining on the grand scale is proceeding, The great mine of the Iron Ore Company of Canada at Labrador City is proceeding at a greatly accelerated pace, end the equally great mine at City of Wabush as commenced production and will gather considerable speed in the present year. The Treasury of our Province will com­mence in the forthcoming financial year to benefit notably by these developments. In the first year of our career as a Province of Canada the total value of all ores produced was $27,500,000. In the year that ended in December past it had risen to $192,000,000, and there appears to be good reason to suppose that in the current year the total production of minerals in this Province will reach the satisfactory sum of $250,000,000. The figure, my Ministers believe, will continue to grow steadily in the coming years. They believe that the minerals produced in the Province might very well come to a total, in the next half dozen years, of not less than $400,000,000 a year.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Our Province is now approaching the sixteenth anniversary of her history, and my Government have considered it to desirable that intensive studies be made of some of the more fundamental aspects of our Provincial life and economy. Five Royal Commissions have been appointed to study and report upon education and youth, transportation in all its phases, electric power, public health, and the overall and particular economic probabilities and possibilities of Newfoundland and Labrador. Nearly fifty well known citizens have generously consented to serve on these Royal Commissions, and to give much of their time for the next year or two to these enquiries. At the same time my Ministers have been considering the desirability of making certain changes in the structure of governmental administration. It is possible that there will be a re-arrangement of some of the functions of the several departments into which the Government is organized. Functions that are presently the responsibility of one Department may well be assigned to another, and in this way a considerable reorganization take place. This, of course, if done at all, would be done in the interest of greater efficiency and economy of administration. My Ministers are endeavouring also to find a suitable person of wide practical experience in financial matters to be employed as financial adviser to the Government. It is apparent now that in addition to the normal sums that the Government must from time to time raise to defray the costs of new roads, new hospitals, new schools, and other new capital establishments, there will be also the need for the Power Commission to raise substantial capital sums for their purposes. Your House has already passed a Bill intended to authorize the creation of a Municipal Loan Board to administer all municipal loans in the Province. Coordination of financial policy in this and related fields would appear to make it necessary that the Government fortify the public service by the addition of such an adviser.

It must be apparent also that Government in our Province is rapidly becoming what is often called big business. The Department of Health, for example, employs thousands of people to operate hospitals and other health institutions. These institutions, while of course they are primarily places where medical and surgical treatment is given, are at the same time virtual hotels. There is one side of their operation which is almost purely commercial. The same observation might truthfully be made of the Department of Highways, which deals in many millions of dollars' worth of equipment, buildings, machineryand other forms of property. The Department of Public Works, the Department of Public Welfare, and a number of other Departments of Government are concerned with several kinds of property, and to that extent may be regarded as commercial institutions. My Ministers are considering the advisability of creating a new Department or section of Government to deal with the purely business or commercial side of Government administration. You may be asked in this Session to consider legislation providing for these important changes.

In the present year we are to see the commencement of construction of the proposed Arts and Culture Centre. Half of its estimated $5 million cost is to come to us as a gift from the Government of Canada as part of the Centennial Celebrations of Confederation. Two new handsome buildings are also to be constructed on the University Campus, and work has already commenced. You will be asked to enact legislation covering these matters.

We are to witness this year the opening of four new hospitals in our Province, at Labrador City, Happy Valley, Bell Island and St. John's. New hospitals have been opened in the past year or so at Grand Falls, Gander and Baie Verte. My Ministers hope that the splendid new Children's Hospital can be opened before the expiration of the coming financial year.

Great strides are being made in the expansion of our medical services, and you will be asked to make new provision for a number of these in the present Session.

My Government continue to plan for the creation of the Medical College which they feel must soon form part of University.

The present year should see the opening of the new Hoyles Home, the name by which the newly constructed Home for the Aged and Infirm is to be known in future. Sir Hugh Hoyles was the first native born son to become Prime Minister of Newfoundland, and my Ministers feel that his name should thus be kept fresh in the memory of our people.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

You will be asked to enact amendments to some thirty to forty pieces of legislation. Perhaps the most important of these will concern the Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation.

My Government have decided to celebrate next year the completion in the present year of the Trans-Canada Highway across Newfoundland. The celebration will take the form of inviting Newfoundlanders in all parts of the world to come home to their native land to see for themselves the changes and improvements that have taken place since our country a Province of Canada and we became citizens of that great land. It is to be known tentatively as Come Home Year, it is felt that many thousands of Newfoundland's sons and daughters will come back to join us for a few days or weeks in the course of the summer. A committee has been appointed to plan the overall features of the year, and under its general authority many other commitees will be created for special purposes within the whole programme. Difficult problems have got to be overcome in connection with transportation into and out of the Island, accommodation while here, and many others as well. It is very necessary that all hotelkeepers, and operators of motels, restaurants, snack bars, shops, taxis and buses, gas bars and service stations and similar institutions join actively in the campaign to give and express the warmest possible welcome to all our visitors next year. Operators of train, steam­ship and airplane services are to be invited to join in the effort. City and town councils throughout the Province, but more particularly at St. John's and Corner Brook, Carbonear, Harbour Grace, Clarenville, Wesleyville, Glovertown, Gander, Lewis­porte, Springdale, St. Anthony, Stephenville and Stephenville Crossing, Port aux Basques, Grand Bank, Fortune, Burin, Placentia, will be urged to take a very active part in the proqramme. Service clubs, fraternal societies, Chambers of Commerce, and other commercial and industrial bodies will be invited to become active. Welcome signs should be everywhere displayed, our highways and public roads should be beautified, our homes should be freshly painted, and in every way our cities and towns beautifed and made ever more attractive. This Come Home Year for Newfoundlanders might well be the start of a great tourist development for this Province, and my Ministers will spare no effort to make it a success.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

Considerable interest has been aroused by the reported discovery of signs of important deposits of oil and natural gas in the shallow waters lying just beyond our Island shore. My Ministers have granted exploration rights over large sections of our offshore, underwater areas, and this coming spring and summer should see substantial activity by way of exploration by several parties who have received these concessions. The Government of Canada have raised the question of where the title to these limits lies, but Newfoundland has little doubt about the matters, as it is felt by this Province that these rights belong initially to the Provinces and not to the Federal authority. You will doubtless be asked in the present Session to enact legisla­tion on this matter.

You will be asked in this Session to authorize my Ministers to guarantee a bond issue in the amount of $15 million toward the cost of a pulp and paper mill proposed for Come-by-Chance. This mill is proposed to be built by the Newfoundland Pulp and Chemical Company, to whom concessions of timber limits have been issued both on the Island itself and in Labrador. The Company have proposed to my Government that they commence this year the construction of a mill to manufacture 100,000 tons of newsprint each year and 75,000 tons of bleached sulphate pulp, which would represent a daily output of approximately 500 tons. Such a mill would consume 300,000 cords of pulpwood each year. The newsprint paper would be marketed in the United States, and the pulp in Europe. The entire output of the mill would be marketed by three companies, one in Finland, another in Holland and the third in Italy. The Company estimate that it will take from twenty to twenty-four months to complete the structure and install the machinery. The mill will require close to 30,000 horsepower of electricity, to come from Baie d'Espoir. The total cost of the mill is stated to be $50 million. Ten million dollars of this would be subscribed as equity capital by the promoters, leaving forty millions of the total to be raised by the sale of bonds. Fifteen of the forty million dollars would be guaranteed by Newfoundland. The period of the guarantee would be somewhat limited, being less than fifteen years, and would parallel that of the contracted sale of the mill's output.

My Ministers are gratified to be in a position to report that substantial progress appears to have been made by the organization ­headed by Mr. John C. Doyle for the starting of a large semi-chemical pulp mill in Labrador. The proposal here is to construct a mill to produce 1,000 tons of semi-chemical pulp, liner board, and corrugating paper each day. Mr. Doyle has been very thorough in his investigations and preparations in connection with this project. Some fifteen tons of Lake Melville pulpwood were gathered and flown to Sweden for testing. A second planeload of an equal amount was similarly flown and tested. A third amount of about a hundred cords was carried by steamship to Montreal and there trans-shipped to Sweden for still further testing. A final one hundred cords have been delivered to Sweden in recent days. The first of these shipments of pulpwood was put through pilot plant tests; these tests proving satisfactory, the larger amounts were commercially manufactured into pulp. This pulp was then manufactured at several paper mills in Europe into different kinds of paper. Finally, some fifty tons of the pulp were brought from Sweden to the United States and run through paper-making machines in recent weeks. All of these tests have proved the wood of Lake Melville to be of very superior quality, and to yield greater volume of pulp. Negotiations have been carried on with two substantial American paper manufacturers, and my Ministers have been informed in recent days that these two paper com­panies have given firm Letters of Intent to Mr. Doyle's organiz­ation to purchase the output of the proposed mill. One of these companies is Whippany Paper Board Company of Whippany, New Jersey.

In the meanwhile, my Government have been approached by the Bowater Pulp and Paper Company of Newfoundland with a request to be given the opportunity to obtain substantial additional supplies of pulpwood within the Province for use in some of their mills in the United Kingdom. My Government have heard this request sympathetically, but have indicated that they would not be happy to see large quantities of pulpwood exported in raw state from the Province. They have further suggested that as the most likely source of this pulpwood timber would be on the NALCO holdings in Lake Melville which are to support the proposed large pulp mill, it appeared to be desirable that in return for the right to obtain their required supply of pulpwood in Lake Melville the Bowater organization should be prepared to conduct all of the logging operations in that area. They would thus, if this proposal were agreeable to all concerned, be responsible for harvesting not only the pulpwood supplies they wanted for their own use, but those needed by the new pulp mill as well. My Ministers feel that if profitable markets are found for the proposed mill, add competent management is put in charge of its operation, its success would still depend upon efficient operations in the supply of pulpwood raw material. The Bowater organization have had great experience in this field, and if they agreed to undertake this part of the task it would do much to assure the ultimate success of the mill operation. Negotiations initiated by my Government have been going on between the Bowater and Doyle companies.

The original intention in this programme was to build the mill somewhere on the outer coast of Labrador and by some means to move the pulpwood from the Lake Melville area to the coast. Considerable study has been given to the thought that the wood, after being chipped into small portions, would be pumped by pipeline to the mill. The latest thinking, however is that the mill should be built on the shore of Lake Melville, and not on the outside coast, so as to remove the need of moving the large quantities of wood considerable distances from the source. Some knowledgeable persons are strong in their view that Lake Melville itself can be navigated throughout the year, although for perhaps two months each year the drift ice on the outside coast would forbid the movement of freight ships.

If my Government's plans for Lake Melville are found to be possible of fulfillment, we may see on the southern shore of that great inland bay not only the 1,000-ton mill and the small town that would have to be associated with it but also a smaller mill manufacturing ground wood pulp for Bowater paper mills in England, and an important new hydro-electric development to serve them both. If agreement can be reached between the Bowater and Doyle companies in the immediate future, then the Bowater Woods Deportment would move into Lake Melville to commence logging operations during the present season. Such operations, if they commenced, would represent the start of what would quickly become one of the largest industrial operations in our Province. I am quite sure that all our people will pray for the success of my Government's effort directed to this end.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Honourable House of Assembly:

You will be asked, to vote Supply to Her Majesty, and Estimates of Expenditure will be laid before you in due course. I invoke the blessing of Almighty God upon your deliberations.