

## \$30 MILLION REJUVENATION

# Fears of brownouts fade on Island

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Sun Business Writer

**JORDAN RIVER**—Fears of brownouts became a thing of the past for Vancouver Island with the opening of a \$30 million rejuvenated power project here Monday.

The project, 45 miles west of Victoria, involved the three-year redevelopment of a hydro-electric system which produced its first power in 1911.

B.C. Hydro chairman Dr. Gordon Shrum, addressing a luncheon after the opening ceremony, said Vancouver Island had come closer to having a brownout than any other part of B.C.

"But now we have spent \$30 million securing a steady supply of power for you people in Greater Victoria and on Vancouver Island," he said. "Because people today don't like the lights to go out."

Dr. Shrum said B.C. has never experienced a brownout

which is unusual considering the present shortage of power in many parts of North America.

"This plant we opened today goes a long way towards preventing a brownout from ever happening," he said. "We at Hydro like the people of Victoria so we spent \$30 million to give you a steadier supply of power."

Dr. Shrum pointed out that more than half of the money spent on the project stayed in B.C. because two major construction contracts, totalling \$17 million, were awarded to Emil Anderson Construction Co. Ltd. of Hope.

"And I say that for those of you who think all our contracts go overseas," he stated.

However, Jordan River was far from being an all-Canadian job. Other major contracts for equipment at the project were won by Japanese, Yugoslavian and British firms.

And a few minutes after Dr. Shrum made his comment on contracts that stayed in B.C., he went on to announce the award of three new Hydro contracts — all to overseas companies.

The original Jordan River plant consisted of two dams, a flume, a forebay reservoir, four penstocks and a 26,400-kilowatt powerhouse.

In the just-completed redevelopment the two dams have been rehabilitated and remain part of the new system.

The wooden flume, forebay, penstocks and four-unit powerhouse have been replaced by a new 117-foot high dam and power tunnel, a single 5,350-foot-long steel penstock and a new 150,000-kilowatt powerhouse. In spite of having a capacity nearly six times as great as the former plant, the new powerhouse is about a quarter the size of the old one.

A newly constructed 33-mile

long transmission line, energized initially at 132,000 volts, will deliver the power from the new generating station to Goward substation in Saanich. Because of the rugged terrain in this part of the island, helicopters were used to build the line.

The role of the new Jordan River power plant will be to supply peaking and standby power for the Vancouver Island system and to provide additional energy when surplus water is available.

The plant has already been in intermittent operation for about a week while it is being tested. When the project is in full operation it will have a complete staff of only four men.

About 200,000 cubic yards of rock were excavated for the 3½-mile tunnel and a laser beam was used to maintain the required tunnel line and grade.

At the peak of activity in the summer of 1970 a work force of 400 was employed on the two major construction contracts.

The new 430-foot long Elliott Dam was named after retired Hydro employee Jack Elliott who worked at the Jordan River power plant for 39 years, 18 of them as superintendent.

And it was Elliott who turned a switch at the opening ceremony to simulate a "load

rejection" for the benefit of the Hydro officials, guests and newsmen invited to the opening ceremony Monday.

During a load rejection, the pressure regulating valve is opened to relieve high pressure in the penstock and the extra water escapes through a pipeline. It is a safety measure designed to take care of accidents like lightning striking the line.

The spectators heard a warning whistle — to alert fishermen on the river of the changing water level — and then went outside the plant to see a roaring, splashy escape of water that would have rivalled Niagara Falls.

A hydro spokesman said that neither of the two old reservoirs was raised in height and the new half-mile long reservoir has been completely cleared of timber.

However, Monday's guided tour only got as far as the new powerhouse. The road to the new Elliott dam, about four miles upstream from the powerhouse, was said to be too snowy for safe navigation.

Monday's visitors stayed in the powerhouse which has an interior as colorful as a children's kindergarten. But the daffodil yellow apple green, flame red and snow white paint was meant to be more than just pretty.

The colors provide an at-a-glance guide to the plant per-

sonnel. Yellow pipes for oil, green for water, white for air and red for heat.

Vancouver Island's consumption of electricity has risen at an average annual rate of eight per cent over the past six years, reaching 3.8 billion kilowatt hours in the year ending last March 31.

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## Canadian dollar stays stable

TORONTO (CP) — The Canadian dollar remained stable during what one trader called "a relatively normal day" of trading on domestic currency markets Monday.

The value of the dollar was about six-tenths of a cent above par with the United States dollar when markets

The agreement was for a devaluation of the U.S. dollar, which meant automatic revaluation of most other currencies and for additional upward adjustments in the value of some currencies.

The Canadian dollar was the only currency among those of the Group of Ten in-

U.S. dollar as New York was the only major currency market open.

Traders said it was not possible Monday to assess accurately the value of other currencies against the Canadian dollar because most markets were closed.