

Adjournment Debate

fore, into the Red River and then into Manitoba's lake system causing very severe damage to Manitoba in terms of the quality of the water and the fishing industry there.

This project has been under way for some ten years. Each year there seems to be an additional allocation of funds to it by the United States government. With each additional allocation of funds, the project becomes closer to completion. As this occurs, there is the added possibility that the total project will in fact be completed. When that happens, we in Manitoba will suffer very severe consequences.

We have the provincial government of Manitoba involved. It has sent notes of protest to United States officials. We have had local officials involved in the person of the mayor of Portage La Prairie, and we have had local groups formed in Manitoba to travel to North Dakota to let the Americans know about our concerns. I might add that there is a considerable amount of opposition to the project in North Dakota because this project will cause some detrimental effects in the United States.

What concerns me is that either the federal government is not doing what I think it can or should be doing or, if in fact it is representing our interests to the Americans the way it should, it is not letting us know.

There is a considerable amount of public opinion in terms of concern about the Garrison project, a concern which is increasing day by day. I should like to quote briefly from three newspaper articles which have appeared since the beginning of the year. Before doing so I should like to say that I raised this very issue on January 13 following a question I asked in this House on November 19. I received what I consider to be a very favourable reply from the parliamentary secretary. I very much appreciated that reply and sent a clipping of my remarks on the topic along with that reply to a local station in Portage La Prairie. I might also add that I felt I received a very favourable reply from the Prime Minister last Thursday. In the meantime, the project proceeds.

On January 15 the *Brandon Sun* ran an article which said:

In Bismarck Thursday Mr. Olson said the Garrison water diversion project must proceed on schedule until claims that it would ruin Manitoba's fishing industry are proven.

Mr. Olson is the governor of North Dakota.

That leads us to some very serious consequences in terms of the attitude of the governor of North Dakota. We realize that if the project is further advanced and we do in fact receive polluted water and some foreign fish species and fish diseases, it will be too late to turn the tap off or turn the waters back. Once the fish come, they will be with our water systems in Manitoba literally forever.

On January 23 the *Winnipeg Free Press* ran an editorial which said, again speaking of Governor Olson of North Dakota:

The more serious of the governor's charges, from the Canadian point of view, is his perception that there has not been a Canadian objection to the diversion that could be classified as "official".

• (2215)

I think this is not entirely true and I do know that Manitoba has sent official protests. I took the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) at his word when he said he was going to raise it with President Reagan on his visit here today. I think there has been some official protest raised, but the perception is that they have not been official enough for the governor of North Dakota to recognize.

The article goes on to read, again referring to Governor Olson when he suggested that:

Manitoba should be willing to accept the damage to its water represented by Garrison in return for permission to build hydro lines across North Dakota so that Manitoba power can be sold to Nebraska.

Clearly this is unacceptable to Manitoba because what they are suggesting, if in fact the governor speaks for his area, is that there be some kind of linkage in terms of allowing Manitoba hydro to be transferred across the northern United States, that that be linked with Manitoba accepting a certain amount of water damage as a result of the Garrison diversion project.

As recently as March 5, there was an article in *The Globe and Mail* which read in part:

Last Dec. 1, U.S. officials sent a note to Ottawa proposing that consultations on the project begin on March 2. The date passed this week without a response from Ottawa, but Canadian officials said yesterday that they plan to agree to begin consultations soon.

This again is very disturbing to us because we have seen a change of administration across the line. They have a new secretary of the interior, and it appears the present government has not seen fit to be in contact with this new administration. So I would urge the parliamentary secretary tonight—and I congratulate him for seconding the motion, which received unanimous consent in the House last Thursday and I know he is concerned about it—to take this matter very seriously because we do not have much time left to stop construction of those parts of the dam that are going to cause irreparable damage to Manitoba.

I would hope, if the parliamentary secretary is not going to accept some of the proposals we have made in terms of what we think the government should be doing, that the government would be prepared to announce some initiatives to convey the kind of message that we think needs to go to the Americans concerning the Garrison River diversion project.

Mr. Robert Bockstael (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the government is seriously concerned about the potential adverse effects of the Garrison diversion project on Canada and has, as promised on numerous occasions, made these concerns clear to the new United States administration. In fact, this very day, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and President Reagan will have had an opportunity to discuss the issue. The concern of the government was evidenced by our support of the recent motion under Standing Order 43, expressing the strong concern of this House that important funding decisions on the Garrison project were