

Water Resources Programs

have surplus water. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is reported to have said that if you have something that you do not intend to use and do not need, you might as well sell it and receive some money in return. This may be true, but if so I would ask where are the facts and figures to support this contention? Do the United States authorities have the facts? They are the only people who have conducted a survey, apart from Mr. Kierans who conducted a survey in respect of the diversion of the waters draining into Hudson's Bay. I do not know what became of that survey. These are the things the parliament of Canada should know before it passes a bill which might contain a loophole allowing water to be exported. I am sure this would not be done unknowingly by any Canadian minister, but it is a possibility. We would not want to see water sneaked across the boundary to supply the towns and villages which might grow up in the area.

● (5:30 p.m.)

I might point out that once one starts to supply water to any given area, whether for drinking purposes, for industry or for the establishment of summer resorts, one is expected to continue to do this and if forced to do so on moral grounds. I think this is an important matter. It is completely for the birds for one to say that we should try it for ten or twenty years, and then cut off the supply if we are short of water. The hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) put this matter very judiciously before the House. I believe the members of the government would be making a very serious error if they did not give due consideration to the management of the water, the pollution of water and the quality of water. Surely, there is a difference. As I pointed out in respect of the Columbia river, the water was utilized for three purposes. It was utilized not only for drinking purposes but first of all for power, then to create an artificial lake and finally to irrigate thousands of acres of land in order to bring them into production. This was of terrific economic value to that area.

I believe this is one amendment Parliament should consider very seriously. I appeal to the government to consider just what this means. We are very fortunate that the difference between management of water and water quality has been raised. In respect of management, we know that under the provincial water resources legislation the province of

Ontario today is building dams in order to create artificial lakes. In the area around the Kawartha Lakes, dams are being built to create artificial lakes. We must consider what basic changes are to be made. This will not only involve water management but also quality management because a lot of areas which previously had been used for lumbering and agricultural operations are now being turned into summer resort areas. So, let me say, we owe the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants a deep debt of gratitude for having placed fairly before us the point that there is a difference between the management and quality of water.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I fail to understand why an hon. member could oppose either of both amendments now under study, one of which reads as follows:

This Act shall not be construed to authorize any treaty or convention with respect to exporting the water resources of Canada, and no treaty, convention or agreement with respect to such export shall be binding unless authorized by the Parliament of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, as mentioned by previous speakers, this means that should a government be requested or decide to divert some waterways for the purpose of exporting water abroad—that is, as far as we are concerned, to the United States—only the Canadian Parliament could authorize such a measure.

At this point I would like to engage in a digression. The Canadian Parliament must have the necessary sovereignty to authorize such diverting of waters to the United States and it must be kept in mind that the provinces also have claims on the waters within their territory.

I cannot help but think of a bill brought in a few years ago and which was mentioned in this house this afternoon by the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters), namely the one providing for the diverting of the Harricanaw River waters into the Great Lakes and, thus, into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, it is well known that these waters that run through the province of Quebec almost from end to end, flow into James Bay near the Ontario border. In view of the fact that this diverting of waters concerns two provinces, they should be consulted before action is taken.

I suggest therefore—and the bill says so anyway—that the provinces should be consulted before any such diversions are made.