

*Water Resources Studies*

sidered in the past and are regarded as impracticable from an economic point of view on the basis of the engineering data available at this time.

[*Translation*]

On March 11, 1965, the same associate of this company again appeared before the Standing Committee on Mines, Forests and Waters to present an amended proposal for the diversion of water from the James Bay watershed to the Ottawa River basin or to the Great Lakes Basin. This proposal is essentially the same as that outlined previously; to my knowledge there has been no change in the general outline of the Grand Canal project.

[*English*]

Press reports have stated that these private entrepreneurs have indicated that the Grand Canal project is being considered by the governments of Ontario and Quebec. Spokesmen for the governments of Ontario and Quebec have indicated that this is not the case.

These press reports also have stated that such a project has been under study for months, both in Canada and in the United States. No consideration or study is being given by the government of Canada to the said Grand Canal scheme or any similar project. To the best of my knowledge neither is any provincial government giving consideration to such a project.

Press reports on the said subject have indicated that water could be sold to the United States under such a project without federal approval. I reaffirm in the strongest possible terms that no water could be sold to the United States without the approval of the government of Canada. No contemplation of such approval is under consideration by the government.

**Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Mr. Speaker, we are glad that the minister has finally made what seems to be a clear and definitive statement on the northern waters projects. One thing on which Canadians are not prepared to compromise is the casual disposal of our energy resources, and particularly our water resources which represent the future of this country.

I was fortunate, Mr. Speaker, to be a member of the standing committee which considered the Grand Canal scheme both in 1961 and in 1965. It was examined in a very cursory way on both occasions, and on both occasions it was decided that there was insuf-

[Mr. Greene.]

ficient evidence and insufficient engineering data upon which to make any conclusion whatsoever.

I believe that what has concerned Canadians more than anything else in the past few months has been the enthusiasm of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources after his return from his visit with Secretary Hickel of the United States. Canadians were concerned about the minister's apparent enthusiasm at that time for a resource exchange package. Members of this House were concerned that this resource exchange package would involve and include water resources as well as many of the other resources in which we are interested. The minister has made it clear today that certainly this is not the case as far as he is concerned, and I do not care whether he is backing away from his original statement or merely reaffirming what he said in the first place. It was not clear at that time. It has certainly been made clear today.

I know hon. members are determined that Canadian water resources must not be included in any energy package without a great deal more thought and consideration than have been put into such projects until the present moment. However, Mr. Speaker, we still worry about the continental approach that the government has taken toward our resources. We are still concerned about what appears to be the casual acceptance of proposals from the Yankee traders that we should exchange certain resources for certain others. We are concerned about the lack of a firm stand in connection with our northern sovereignty and our northern resources. We have been concerned about the lack of firm statements on many of the resource problems that have been coming up over the past few months.

● (2:30 p.m.)

I can only conclude by saying that, taking the minister's statement today at its face value, one of our concerns has been clarified to the extent that the minister has been able to do so. He has made it clear that the work going on in northern Ontario and northern Quebec has nothing whatever to do with the Grand Canal scheme or with water diversion or would result in the sale or diversion of water to the United States. With this one statement we are satisfied. We hope the minister and the government will keep on making statements to assure the House that they are really sincere about protecting Canada's national heritage.