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tive government has gone back to sleep now that the election is over. Premier Devine is able to do what he wants with Rafferty-Alameda.

The federal government is able to do what it wants with the GST and nothing is to be done by the Manitoba government, surely, something that the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre would find as objectionable as I do.

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, if I may just make a quick reply.

My wife has always reminded me never to say: "I told you so." I think in this case the hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona, my colleague for Winnipeg North Centre and myself could say: "We told you so."

We said very clearly during the course of the debate in the Manitoba election that this was a campaign of false pretence and that the then leader of the Conservative Party in Manitoba was parading around Manitoba paddling his canoe on the pristine lake. Probably the Souris River was the site of the television take-out, with a borrowed canoe no less.

It is no wonder that I am sorry about the person who will not get the canoe back, because if he tries to go down the Souris in the year to come, it is probably going to be totally corroded by the kind of pollution that would be let loose.

All I can say is that the Government of Manitoba has become fellow travellers with the government here. It is trying to protect Grant Devine. I say it is a lost cause. Let him go. He is not worth this kind of complete and total abdication of responsibility.

Grant Devine, for all his friendship and association with Manitoba and federal Tories, is not worth taking the kind of action we see today, which is to betray a fundamental stewardship of this federal government.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I sat here listening to comments that were made about a subject that back home is portrayed as a matter which has good guys and bad guys in it.

For the life of me, I cannot understand how anybody in all good conscience can stand up and say that protecting run-off, preventing flooding conditions, is in anyone's harmful interests. I look at the Boundary Dam as an example that has existed for years on a tributary to the

Souris River. I see absolutely no pollution coming from this tested project.

As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, when you combine all the good that is associated with this project, one is hard pressed to believe in fact that we could be actually standing and talking here about a semi-arid area of this country, Saskatchewan, and be concerned about the storage of water. I am concerned as anyone else is of all the environmental impact statements that have been done to date.

When you consider the opportunity given to us to be partially funded in a major sense by the United States to prevent flooding, to store water, to provide for a possible increase in water tables throughout the farms, how can anyone be against it?

I ask the hon. member who has given this dissertation today: Does he not really feel that there is more than just an average amount of politics in this problem presented before us today? Is there any reality to the concerns that storing water in Saskatchewan, which has been water starved for the past number of years, is in fact not the right way to go?

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that there should be serious efforts made to deal with the basic problem of dryness on the Canadian prairies.

We could start by doing an awful lot more about conserving our soil problems, on which there is no action being taken. I remind him of this. He has been an active politician in the prairies for many years. I recall for him the Garrison diversion. I can recall going to Washington and having a congressman for North Dakota use exactly the same words about the Garrison diversion, that it is going to store water. It is going to give new irrigation run-offs. It is going to provide all these benefits.

The point is this: There is a trade-off between benefits and losses. We are trying to set in place in this country an honest, open system for making that assessment and trying to get governments and private industry to begin honouring that process.

When there are governments like the Government of Saskatchewan and now the federal government allowing that process to be distorted and perverted, it destroys the whole thing. What we are saying here is that the issue goes beyond Rafferty-Alameda. It goes to the fundamental heart of whether we, as a country, will be prepared to have closer, better and more careful stew-