

Oral Questions

to send all their beer down to the United States. It just means that there is a provision which deals with beer.

I will refer again to Mr. Yeutter who headed the United States negotiating team. In the same interview he said the following about water: "But I don't see it being an FTA issue. I see it being a separate issue that will inevitably draw attention in time. Now, clearly all of that would have to be worked out on the basis of an international compact between the two countries".

Water in its natural state is not included. There is nothing to fear. As long as the Government is kept in power there is nothing to fear about the transfer of water in large amounts to the United States.

PROVISIONS OF AGREEMENT

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister for International Trade. He will be well aware that the provisions of the trade deal transcend government policy now or in the future. He indicated in his response to the Leader of the Official Opposition that the policy on water can change. It could change with this Government and can change with a future Government.

If the Minister felt it was appropriate to exempt logs from this trade deal, and also that it was appropriate to exempt beer, with the concern that this has created across the country why not work to exempt water? Is the Minister saying that beer is more important than water?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can tell Hon. Members that beer has never crossed my lips. I don't like the stuff. Whether it is different from water, I don't know, having never tasted beer.

To return to the question, it is not appropriate, nor is it necessary, to deal with water in the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement. Water has been dealt with in a statement of policy by the Minister of the Environment. If and when the Government decides that legislation is also necessary, the way in which to deal with the matter would be with legislation brought into this House by the Minister of the Environment.

The Liberals were in power for 40 years and they did nothing, they didn't adopt any policy. The man who was Minister of the Environment then did not care about water. We do not know what he cared about because he never spoke up at all during the time he was Minister.

If the Government decides that legislation is necessary, the hon. gentleman will hear about it in the usual way. Perhaps we should open up longer during the summer to deal with it in that way, but we are not proposing to open up the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement which was signed last January

2 and which does not deal with water. Nothing forces us to divert water to the United States.

REQUEST THAT AMENDMENT BE INTRODUCED

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I remember the words of the Minister for International Trade when he said to the people of Canada not many months ago, "If we told them what we were going to actually do they'd never vote for us". In recalling that now I wonder whether there is not some hidden agenda here. I wonder whether the Minister is not trying to cover up what the Government is actually up to.

If the Government were listening to the people of Canada it would know that people across Canada are very concerned about the whole discussion of water diversion into the United States, whether from the Great Lakes, the Nawapa plan, the Garrison Project, or whatever the project. There are very serious concerns.

This morning on the West Coast the former Minister for International Trade said that the Government is not at all interested in an amendment at this time. At this very critical moment the Minister could set aside the concerns of Canadians and make a lot of Canadians feel a lot easier about the Government's intention, forgetting about its stated policy, by simply bringing in an amendment. Why will he not do that simple thing at this time to ease the fears which are growing by the day across Canada?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, if there are fears growing by the day across Canada on this issue it is because the people are being misled by hon. gentlemen opposite who do not want them to understand the position.

With respect to the diversion of water as suggested by the Governor of Illinois, that is not a matter which can be dealt with in the free trade agreement. That is a matter to be dealt with under bilateral treaties with the United States under international law. According to the precedents since the early forties the Americans have never attempted to divert water in that way without consultation with and the consent of the Government of this country.

The hon. gentleman referred to something which he alleges I said at some time. I remember reading what the hon. gentleman said about his colleagues. He said, "They have misspoken the truth, they have misrepresented what happened, they have lied, they have not told the facts. I don't know how much blunter I can be about that". It was with reference to Mr. Waddell and Mr. Manly that the hon. gentleman said those words. How does he explain them?