

Government Orders

I remember a former member in this House, Mr. Desmarais, the brother of the famous Mr. Desmarais, was heading a company that was supposed to sell water from Canada to the United States. I, as a member of Parliament, have problems with a bill that comes in, looks nice, but is one of which we do not know the implications. The government does not answer the fundamental questions such as how we are going to deal with our water resources in the new North American free trade agreement.

I am asking the hon. member whether he could elaborate on this point.

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague because he is so right when he identifies the fact that some of the best lawyers in this nation have stated categorically that there is potential, under the free trade agreement, for water to be sold to the Americans.

We have asked the government many times to request a one-page special protocol agreement from the United States saying that water is not part of the free trade agreement. I have even written Clayton Yeutter myself asking him for a clear-cut position on whether he believes water is part of the free trade agreement and he has never answered me. I have written him several times.

I am concerned about the water and free trade agreement connection. I think it is one part of the hidden agenda of the Americans in the free trade agreement.

I want to address the point about the Grand Canal, the great recycling and northern development project. In chapter 9 of Premier Bourassa's book *Power from the North*, he describes that project in detail.

I had a town hall meeting in my riding with the gentleman, Mr. Thomas Kierans, who conceived the idea of recycling the lower end waters of James Bay and channelling them down through into the Great Lakes and ultimately through Lake Michigan into the United States. It was a hotly contested debate.

The point is that there is a lot of concern and most important is the environmental concern.

We will pass in this House today Bill C-13. With it, anything and everything related to the environment in this country will have to go through this process. Make no mistake about it. In a newspaper article I saw that the provincial premier of the environment for the province of Quebec thought this was some kind of a totalitarian bill. That language was a bit aggressive. Make no mistake

about it, and he should not make any mistake about it, the provincial environmental system will be subservient to the national government's environmental procedures after Bill C-13 is passed today.

That is something that the people of Canada will welcome.

Mr. Kindy: Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the details on the Grand Canal. I would like the hon. member to answer and give his opinion because he wrote to the negotiators on the free trade agreement on whether the water was included. I understand that he did not get a straight answer.

What is his personal feeling? Is water included in the free trade agreement? In the new free trade agreement with Mexico and the United States will it be included? It is a hypothetical question but he could probably answer it.

Mr. Mills: Obviously I cannot deal with a hypothetical question in terms of Mexico. We do not know what is going to be included.

In terms of the free trade agreement with the United States, the answer is categorically yes. Water is a part of the free trade agreement.

I am not an expert on water law, but I have gone to lawyers who are experts and they have verified that.

• (1140)

I believe that water is the secret part of the agenda as to why the Americans really want it. I sincerely believe this, I say to my friend from Calgary. By the way, if you do not believe that, then the government should get a one-page special protocol letter from the United States government saying water is not a part of the free trade agreement. Remember that Clayton Yeutter, who was the chief negotiator of the free trade agreement, did his PhD thesis in North American water management. His whole thought process his whole life has been on North American water management.

We possess enough water in Canada to look after the entire world. I am not against sharing our water with the United States, but I do not think we should just be giving it to them. This is a separate debate and a separate discussion. In the future, rather than have people die of thirst, our friendly neighbours to the south, it may be that we can use water as a way of trading for bringing jobs back here. I am not paranoid about trading water with the United States, but we should get something in return, whereas right now we have given it away.