

• (1050)

As I warned last night, the governments of the Northwest Territories, and consequentially with Bill C-52 the Government of the Yukon, should be very alert to obtaining the necessary federal funds to continue to conduct the kinds of nationally significant programs that there need to be in relation to water. As I pointed out, there are major water systems flowing from the provinces into the Yukon and, in this case, into the Northwest Territories. River systems that have been dammed, diverted, contaminated, polluted, sedimented and so on in other jurisdictions come into the Northwest Territories and are going to have an impact on their capacity to administer this legislation.

It is a similar situation with the growing understanding of the movement of airborne toxins through aerosols. In many jurisdictions in Europe, in what was formerly the Soviet Union, and in continental North America, through the process in some situations of incineration, the placement of materials that historically would have gone to a landfill site or to some kind of recycling process are in many cases now being run through an incineration process. They go into the atmosphere. They are moving up through the atmosphere and back down into the water systems of the Northwest Territories.

As I said last night, we are suddenly starting to realize the magnitude of the toxification and the pollution problems affecting the Northwest Territories which is, as we all know, the largest single jurisdiction in Canada and soon perhaps to become two provinces along with the Yukon. So there would be three provinces north of 60 ultimately dealing with these major and significant water issues.

I just flag this for the government members of the Northwest Territories, that members of this House generally agree the delegation as proposed in Bills C-51 and C-52 is a good idea is long overdue and this matter should go to a legislative committee for constructive evaluation to hear witnesses from the Northwest Territories.

Members should be very careful in evaluating the amount of expenditure going on presently at the federal level to deal with this particular jurisdiction and the kinds of international and national responses that are going to be needed to be to evaluate not only the waters that are flowing from other jurisdictions into the North-

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west Territories and the impact that will have on their licensing and utilization regimes, but also on the fish, birds and wildlife, the impacts that any modifications to these water systems will have, the implications of international phenomena such as airborne toxins, not the least of which continues to be airborne acidification, SO_x and NO_x that come down as acid precipitation and the bio-accumulation and bio-magnification of these toxins up into the life cycles that come to affect particularly the more rural aboriginal and First Nation communities in the Northwest Territories.

There will be a need for a cumulative impact study of the effect, not just of methane releases from large dam reservoir projects, but the importance of the impact evaluation of the reduction at certain times of year of flows of fresh water from the Northwest Territories and from the bounding jurisdictions of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec on the whole watershed of Hudson Bay and James Bay. Already there is growing scientific evidence that the reduction of freshwater flow into Hudson Bay and James Bay is having a potentially negative and deleterious effect on the Quebec fishery, the Newfoundland fishery and the maritime fisheries.

This is a great opportunity for a small, growing government and administration in the Northwest Territories to take on a jurisdictional task that is truly theirs. They must assure themselves that they acquire the appropriate fiscal instrument from the Parliament of Canada to properly do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I remind hon. members that the length of speeches is now 20 minutes maximum, with a question and comment period.

[*Translation*]

I may remind hon. members of the Standing Orders. Since the minister presented the motion, even if he did not speak, according to the Standing Orders his speaking time is deemed to have expired. Consequently, the Chair must then recognize a spokesperson for one of the three parties. That is why I am recognizing a spokesperson for the opposition. Subsequently, I will recognize a government member but I repeat, this is a technicality. The government side had a chance to speak yesterday when presenting the bill but did not take advantage of this opportunity. I will now conclude the first round by recognizing a member for the opposition.