Garrison Diversion

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[*English*]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

GARRISON DIVERSION—SUGGESTED MEASURES TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT OF MANITOBA

The House resumed, from Monday, February 9, 1981, the motion of Mr. Sargeant:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should consider the advisability of taking those measures necessary to ensure that there is no damage caused to the Manitoba environment by the completion of the Garrison Diversion Unit in the State of North Dakota and, that such measures to be considered could include:

1. The convening of a joint meeting between provincial, state and federal authorities affected by the Garrison project;

2. The offer of legal and technical assistance to those citizen's groups in Canada now attempting to halt the progress of the Garrison Diversion; and

3. The bringing to trial in the World Court, the government of the United States, should Canada be unsuccessful in its efforts to receive satisfactory assurances regarding the future safety of her environment.

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Mr. Speaker, this motion refers to the Garrison Diversion project and addresses suggested measures to protect the environment of Manitoba. The first measure set out in the motion is as follows:

1. The convening of a joint meeting between provincial, state and federal authorities affected by the Garrison project;

It is too late for that, Mr. Speaker; it has been done many times over the past few years.

The second measure set out in the motion is as follows:

2. The offer of legal and technical assistance to those citizen's groups in Canada now attempting to halt the progress of the Garrison Diversion;

We are far too late for that, Mr. Speaker. It has all been done years ago.

The third proposal set out in the motion is:

3. The bringing to trial in the World Court—

We do not have time for that either. The United States has made it perfectly clear that it is going to complete the Garrison Diversion project, and it has started work on the Lone Tree section of the project without consultation with Canada.

I have called on the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to contact the President of the United States personally to discuss the Garrison Diversion project and get assurances that it will not continue without further consultation.

I will go into details in a moment of where the United States, especially North Dakota, has made it perfectly clear that it is going to complete the diversion plan. We have been told that a fish screen is to be installed to act as a barrier. The report of the International Joint Commission indicated the commissioners simply did not believe that a workable and reliable fish screen could be developed. It wrote:

It is doubtful that the McClusky Canal fish screen even with modifications would be a reliable and effective barrier to the transfer of foreign biota from the Missouri River to the Hudson Bay drainage basin.

A lot of studies have been done on this fish screen. We do not know who is right and who is wrong, but they are proceeding with it regardless.

I want to make some comments about the Republican Senator, Mark Andrews, of North Dakota. He has described Canadian objection to the controversial Garrison water diversion project as a bogeyman and red herring. He stated that the decision to build this project was not going to be made in Canada and that it would not be made in Washington but in North Dakota. He said that if people there can get their act together, they will have it. There could be no statement plainer than that, Mr. Speaker, to indicate that Senator Mark Andrews will do everything in his power to see that the Garrison Diversion is completed.

I have debated this subject in the past with Senator Andrews who is known to his colleagues as "the king of pork". He persuaded a House-Senate conference committee to reinstate a water diversion project after it had been overwhelmingly defeated in the House of Representatives.

Congressman Silvio Conte stated publicly in Washington that the Senators knew that they must vote in favour of these moneys for Garrison or risk having Senator Andrews put a halt to their own projects. He is determined to have the diversion project completed, Mr. Speaker, regardless of whether we go to the World Court or whatever.

I debated this subject with Senator Andrews at a Canada-U.S. parliamentary meeting in Calgary in 1979. At that time he made a number of statements which I subsequently had Environment Canada check. In a letter to me on September 27, 1979, an officer of the Department stated:

In reply to your question I think Congressman Andrews has either completely missed the point of our objections or is trying to sidestep them. The main thrust of our concerns, and this is a problem that was identified by the International Joint Commission, is that the Garrison Diversion Project would introduce into the Red River drainage biota not naturally found there.

I was given a detailed answer of places where Senator Andrews had misled the discussions at the Canada-U.S. parliamentary meeting.

The Attorney General for North Dakota has said that construction of the Garrison Diversion project will not be stopped by the Canadian Government or by the IJC if the United States determines that the project is in the United States' best interests. He said that the bottom line is that the project will be built if the United States Government decides it is in its best interests. That is what the Attorney General of North Dakota, Walter Wefald told a University of North Dakota law class in 1982. You can see the determination to complete the project and why the motion that we are debating today has come too late.

When the Hon. Member for Selkirk-Interlake (Mr. Sargeant) introduced his motion on February 9, 1981, he said:

We in Manitoba have not been reassured in the past with regard to the government's concern about the Garrison diversion project.

NDP provincial Governments in the past have not shown a proper regard for this, Mr. Speaker. They have sat back while the project went full speed ahead.