

● (1805)

The Government has a responsibility for accountability to the people of Canada. It should tell us its position and why we are paying to support a program that could curtail freedom of the press and, therefore, curtail political freedom around the world. What is the position of the Government? Will it not only disagree with that program as it has in the past, thankfully, will it also oppose that kind of program?

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Lapierre (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, to answer the question put by the Hon. Member of the Opposition, I would, first of all, like to situate the report by the International Commission of Enquiry on Communications Problems and then discuss the position we took on this issue. I think the Hon. Member's picture of the report is not quite clear.

The Commission, as we all know, was created by the UNESCO General Conference in 1976. A number of experts, including one Canadian, Mrs. Betty Zimmerman, who was then Director of Radio-Canada International, were asked to sit on the Commission, which was chaired by Mr. MacBride. The Commission submitted its report in 1980 at the 21st General Conference of UNESCO in Belgrade. However, the Hon. Member ought to realize that the MacBride report was not adopted by UNESCO. Some of the recommendations it contained were the subject of a resolution adopted by consensus, inviting the Director General, Mr. M'Bow, to undertake, and I quote:

—to undertake or direct the studies and analyses required for the formulation of concrete and practical proposals for the creation of a new world order of information and communications.

Let me reassure the Hon. Member by reminding him that the provisions of Article 14 of this Resolution list the principles on which this new order could be based. These include freedom of the press, which the Hon. Member himself already mentioned, and the article also covers the compatibility of this new order with the basic principles of international law laid down in the United Nations Charter.

Consequently, the Canadian Government does not consider the MacBride Report as authoritative as the Hon. Member seems to think it is, but takes the position that it should be seen as one of the elements of a broader body of documents on international information and communication. Canada has always had a keen interest in the problems caused by imbalances in the field of information and communications, and we are particularly aware of the importance of the problems encountered by developing countries. As an expression of this interest, we supported another resolution at the UNESCO General Conference in Belgrade, a resolution that created the International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC), which is aimed at responding in a concrete manner to the expectations of many countries.

Adjournment Debate

The Hon. Member asked us to find out what was going on. We are in an excellent position to do so, since Canada was elected to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC and has taken an active part in its work. We have contributed \$250,000 to the Program's operating fund. At the present time, the Program appears to be making a very valuable and highly esteemed contribution. However, I would like to give the Hon. Member the assurance that throughout this debate, Canada intends to defend the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as we have defined them ourselves in the Canadian Constitution.

[English]

GARRISON DIVERSION—UNITED STATES CONTRACT TO CONSTRUCT LONETREE DAM. (B) NON-CONSULTATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Mr. Speaker, today I questioned the acting Secretary of State for External Affairs on what plans he has made regarding the present stage of Garrison in the United States, particularly concerning the Lonetree project. I received the same non-committal, no-action answer that I have been receiving over the past many years. If something is not done quickly and if this Government does not immediately launch a strong and forceful protest to the United States Government we can expect to see the Garrison diversion project fully completed with no second thought given toward the harmful effects it will have on Canadian waters.

On September 6 the United States Government announced that a \$5.82 million contract had been awarded to begin construction of the Lonetree reservoir dam and dykes. This construction project is a principal part of the over-all proposed Garrison water project which has been objected to by Canadian officials, and particularly Manitobans, for many years.

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The fact is that if this project is completed, it will be harmful to our waterways as well as to Manitoba's fishing and agricultural industries. The project will not only cause our industries to suffer but will also result in a violation of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty between Canada and the United States.

The serious effects this project will have in Canada have been stated many times, most recently in a detailed study prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States. The agency has reported that it is unable to support any portions of the project that drain into the Hudson Bay Basin and lead to Manitoba waters. It is also skeptical that a proposal to redirect water through a reservoir will prevent contamination of the Hudson Bay Basin.

Because the American Environmental Protection Agency has stated its support and agreement with the Canadian position on this issue, it would seem there is no alternative but to demand that this project not be completed. On numerous occasions, it has been proven that there exists a hazard to the waters of Canada, regardless of United States safeguarding