

### Water Resources

resources, whether we are talking about mining, the forest industry or our water resources.

This is not always the case, however. Frequently we are not consulted and are left in the dark, presented with a *fait accompli* when it is too late for us to offer any suggestions or have any input regarding these decisions. For example, from the year 1966 to 1970 the amount of money spent by the federal government on studies of northern Ontario water resources will amount to \$2,203,000. This is the federal government's contribution to the Co-ordinating Committee on Northern Ontario Water Resource Studies which was established in accordance with announcements made by the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of Ontario in the early part of 1965.

I do not know what the provincial contribution to these studies is, but I assume that it will be on a shared-cost basis, 50-50. This means that about \$5 million has been spent in the last few years to study water resources in northern Ontario. This information interested us greatly, Mr. Speaker, but to the best of my knowledge no one in the region has been involved or even kept informed of the purposes or results of these studies.

This situation has of course led to a great deal of fear and suspicion. There are rumours about ambitious plans to divert northward-flowing rivers southward into Lake Superior. Those who live on Indian reservations and settlements, people who operate as tourist camp outfitters, and many other citizens, have approached me for information. They do so in a spirit of anxiety. Some ask whether our governments are making plans for the massive exportation of water to the United States. My reply is that I do not know but I will endeavour to find out; I will make inquiries so that we know the purpose of the extensive water resources studies that are going on in our region. Some people claim that the American Corps of Engineers is involved in taking stream-flow measurements. They want to know what these people are doing there. The minister has assured us that to the best knowledge of the Canadian government such people are not involved.

Recently I attended a meeting at which a number of concerned citizens discussed questions of the diversion and exportation of fresh water. I think the announcement which went out indicates how citizens feel when they are not informed or involved when something

[Mr. Penner.]

that affects them directly is going on under their very noses. This is what the letter said in part, Mr. Speaker:

We in the area have been made aware of a gigantic plan by our federal government and that of the United States, to divert huge flows of water now flowing north to flow south to the U.S. Many of us have viewed a detailed mapped plan of the project and are very much concerned over the scheme. The secrecy of the whole plan so far is certainly undemocratic and, according to the mapped plan, could be most devastating to our north country. This is all contrary to what we as Canadians fought for in two world wars. Surely we have a right to know what is going on and how it will affect the future destiny of our children and the country as a whole.

This meeting has been called to discuss this enormous plan and its effect on wildlife and many other aspects. We trust we may have the pleasure of your presence and your views on the project.

I went to that meeting, Mr. Speaker, and met citizens who were deeply concerned and quite disturbed. They had fears and anxieties that the balance of nature, the ecology of northern Ontario would be upset by the diversion of the swift, northward-flowing rivers. This turned out to be an organization meeting. What came out of it was an organization with the interesting name of KNOW, Keep Northern Ontario Water.

They wanted to know what I could tell them about this project. All I could say was that up to the present, eight progress reports had been submitted to the government of Canada and the government of Ontario and, more specifically, to the Co-ordinating Committee on Northern Ontario Water Resource Studies. I was able to acquire progress reports Nos. 6 and 7 through the courtesy of a member of the Ontario legislature. Looking through these, I found a statement of objectives prepared by the Co-ordinating Committee for Studies to be carried out separately by agencies of the two governments. This statement of objectives reads as follows:

With respect to waters draining into James Bay and Hudson Bay in Ontario, to assess the quantity and quality of water resources for all purposes; to determine present and future requirements for such waters; and to assess alternative possibilities for the utilization of such waters locally or elsewhere through diversions.

The latter phrase is the one that catches the eye immediately—"utilization of such waters locally or elsewhere through diversion." Responsibility for hydrologic and engineering studies required to attain these objectives has been divided between the Division of Water Resources of the Ontario Water Resources Commission and the Inland Waters Branch of the federal Department of Energy,