

*Government Orders*

I had difficulty in that often we have been conditioned by the Reform Party that spending is something that its members are very shy about. Is this an area where the Reform Party would shift its traditional attitude?

**Mr. Mills (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, there are areas in which we would not cut. We would be selective in our cutting and our balancing of costs. One area certainly would be environment where we would see no cutting. Our blue sheet said that possibly we might see in the area of criminal justice and environment an increase in spending.

I would like to think the entire House could get behind a project like this one and show environmental leadership. The provinces need it and we could get them onside because it is a universal problem. If somebody can provide a solution for a universal problem, we could very easily get them onside. We have to get out there. We can call it a crusade but we have to handle the problem.

We can have people pay for it. I believe that user pay will work in this area. Instead of paying \$3 for handling their garbage people would in fact pay \$6. I really believe they would if they knew what they were getting for their money. The big problem of people and of us not wanting to spend money is that we see waste and we cannot see value for our dollars.

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of questions for the member for Red Deer whom I compliment on his speech. He certainly brought some interesting ideas to the Chamber. I was very happy to listen to him today.

In particular I was very pleased with the words that he used in his opening remarks. He talked about this being the ground of co-operation, the ground of compromise. Those are the grounds on which I believe the country was built. We live in a very diverse nation. Different people from coast to coast have relied on co-operation and compromise to see them through from day to day and year to year.

The country was built on those grounds. I am very pleased to see the hon. member recognize those grounds at this time. I can only hope the same rules will apply to other issues in the Chamber when we are dealing with issues of great concern to the diverse peoples who live within our borders.

My question deals with the issue of the Oldman dam that the member for Red Deer raised. Bill C-13 now provides some triggers that automatically gets the federal government involved in a project assessment. When I asked a similar question of the parliamentary secretary earlier today, he talked about the federal government being timid in the past in its approach to some of the issues guarded by the provinces.

Could the member for Red Deer indicate whether he believes the federal government has a right to intervene when some of these triggers are in place and provincial governments hesitate and resist federal government involvement in the projects they are promoting?

**Mr. Mills (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, the real answer to that question is to get involved early enough. What so often has happened in the past, whether they have been political deals or lobby groups or special interest groups or whatever, is that there has been a real slow response by the federal government.

The provinces have been slow but the federal government has been slower. The real answer to the problem that the hon. member raises is the speed of response. We hear about these projects. That is when the federal government should get in, provide the leadership role and start negotiations and compromising with the provincial governments. That is where it has to happen early rather than late as in the Oldman dam.

• (1905 )

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, I have a short supplementary question. In his speech the member also talked about water testing, in particular water testing for oil companies in Alberta.

The member may be aware of a project near my constituency where Esso Resources has been withdrawing water with the approval of the provincial government from an aquifer that runs under the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Communities in my constituency have seen reduced water flow as a result of the work in Alberta. There has been a tremendous amount of wrangling between the Saskatchewan and the Alberta interests. There has been no room for federal government assessment or work to date.

With the member's experience would he consider the support of a national water act that would help to bridge some of the gaps between provincial government interests and others to ensure that water is available to all Canadians?

**Mr. Mills (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, we should realize that water will be the most important resource we have in the 21st century. I believe that puts us head and shoulders ahead of the rest of the world. We have something like 9 per cent of world's fresh water supplies. We have to keep it fresh and pure.

Not knowing the exact details the member puts forward, I would think legislation to protect and preserve the water supply is essential and vital to the survival of the country. I firmly believe it is the most important resource we have.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, I have just noticed the clock. It is my understanding that we have only 10 minutes remaining in the day. I do have at least the full 20 minutes allocated to me. I wonder if the House would not like to see the clock and allow me the full 20 minutes when the House next convenes.