

Canadian citizens, both those who are for and against, can argue the issue out in public debate?

• (1420)

The true question is when will this government understand that Canadians do not want to be faced with a *fait accompli* by a government that is hiding its true agenda under a mound of public relations flackery.

**Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)):** Mr. Speaker, when will that member understand that this Canada-U.S. agreement does not allow for water exports.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Weiner:** Except for bottled water, of course, which, coincidentally, I am able to buy from time to time in the United States.

**An hon. member:** There you go.

**Mr. Weiner:** The United States is entitled to a certain portion of the natural flow of the Souris River according to a water apportionment agreement which was developed by the IJC in 1959 and revised as part of this agreement.

The licence issued on August 31, 1989, under the International River Improvements Act, included a condition prohibiting any water diversion from outside the Souris River drainage basin which would increase the natural flow of the river at the international boundary.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Yesterday the Minister of the Environment and another minister told the House that a 1959 agreement developed by the International Joint Commission controls the diversion of Canadian waters to the United States.

Surely both ministers are aware that the IJC, a hallmark of co-operation between Canada and the United States, was entirely excluded from the amendments to that agreement, which are contained in the Rafferty-Alameda agreement—

**Mr. Harvard:** Shame.

### Oral Questions

**Mrs. Catterall:** —which are effective for 100 years and that even today the International Joint Commission has not been informed that its mandate has changed.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister commit the government to immediately call on the expertise of the International Joint Commission and get an agreement that lets Canada control Canadian water in the interests of Canadians?

**Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)):** Madam Speaker, I am sure I was clear in what I said.

**Mr. Cadieux:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Weiner:** The agreement that is in place does not allow export of any water except bottled water. The IJC is a public body. The United States is entitled to what I underlined and I am sure when the hon. member reflects on the answer that I have given her colleague, she will appreciate that there is absolutely nothing but bottled water that could be available right now in the United States.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West):** Madam Speaker, I can understand that the minister is not familiar with the agreement, but it is very clear that this agreement for 100 years surrenders control of Canadian water, no matter what Canadian needs are. Surely, both Canadians and Americans are entitled to a straightforward position and answer from the government on Canadian water and its availability to Americans.

Will the Prime Minister take the occasion of President Bush's visit to say that an unfortunate error has been made with this agreement, that it is not acceptable to Canada. The President is a reasonable man and I am sure he will understand that the Prime Minister wants to correct his mistake.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)):** Madam Speaker, the straight answer is no. No.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.