

*Adjournment Debate*

conservation, energy and natural resources sub-committee in the United States, to the Hon. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State, dated March 19, 1975. The letter reads as follows:

Recently, the General Accounting Office and your department have concluded that "as presently proposed", the Garrison Diversion United in North Dakota, which the Interior Department is now constructing, "would likely result" in pollution of Canadian waters "in violation of Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty with Canada". Interior does not dispute this conclusion.

Despite this, Interior is continuing to construct the project as now planned. Indeed, in a February 28, 1975 letter to our subcommittee, Interior states that "adoption of significantly revised alternative plan of development" to avoid a treaty violation "would require new or amended legislative authority."

It has been suggested at recent joint U.S.-Canadian meetings that the matter be referred to the International Joint Commission (IJC). But in the meantime, the Interior Department is continuing to build the project which is now 18 per cent completed.

I do not object to such a referral. But I find it difficult to understand how the United States can justify continued construction of a project which is certain to result in a Treaty violation.

I hope the parliamentary secretary has some firm answer on this subject tonight, and will not simply say that we are just going to send off another little note to the IJC.

Assurances that the project will not be allowed to result in a treaty violation are empty since there is no indication any alternatives proposed by Interior will ever be acceptable to Canada or Congress. As more money is expended and more of the project completed, it will become increasingly difficult from a political point of view in the United States to halt the project if the IJC finds that no viable alternatives exist—

Mr. Moorhead went on to say:

I strongly share that doubt. I think it is time the United States face up to the fact that our treaty obligations with Canada require a moratorium on further contracting for this project until a viable alternative is developed. Such a moratorium should not result in any costs to the United States. I urge that you take the lead in establishing such a moratorium.

That is very strong language, Madam Speaker, and we cannot ignore it. In another letter from the United States Department of the Interior Commissioner of Reclamation to the deputy under secretary, it is stated, among other things, that the United States will have to do studies into field data for potential pumping plant sites, damsites, canal alignments, desalting plants and brine disposal sites, some in Manitoba, with considerable assistance from outside agencies. The letter goes on:

The March 11, 1975, memorandum from the Assistant Secretary—Land and Water Resources to you recommended that the studies be "informal" and not made available to "local interests nor to the Canadians."

So they are suppressing information from us. This is reason enough to call for this moratorium, and not just send some silly note off to the IJC.

It further states:

Further study of the alternatives at a level below feasibility grade, but sufficient to provide a closer look at the viability of the alternatives in sufficient time to properly consider the request for funding on the construction of the Velva Canal, can be completed by June 1976

In a press release issued yesterday by the Prairie Environmental Defence League Inc. it is stated:

U.S. Officials Conspire to keep Canadians in dark over Garrison project.

[Mr. McKenzie.]

Desalinization plants and brine disposal fields are in store for Manitobans because of the Garrison Diversion project in North Dakota, according to George Heshka, chairman of the Prairie Environmental Defence League. The desalinization plants and brine disposal fields, a U.S. compromise to pollution of the Souris River, were named as alternatives by Gilbert Stammers, commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, in a memo to the deputy under secretary of the department of the interior (attached). In the memo, Stammers said some of the brine disposal fields would be located in Manitoba.

Heshka charged the bureau with "deceit and secrecy" in not reporting the possibility of brine disposal fields to Manitobans and Canadians. Stammers said, "he concurred that studies (concerning desalinization plants and brine disposal fields) should be informal and not made available to local interests nor to the Canadians—"

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. gentleman, but his time has expired.

**Mr. Herb Breau (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member keeps insisting on what he calls a moratorium. To start with, I will just quote what I said on May 20, as recorded at page 5955 of *Hansard*:

In February, 1974, the United States government gave assurances that the United States would honour its obligations under the treaty—

I was referring to the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty. I went on to state:

—the United States would honour its obligation under the treaty and pledged that no project construction potentially affecting waters flowing into Canada would be undertaken unless it were clear that these United States obligations under the treaty would be met.

We have no reason to believe that the United States will not honour its commitment after giving us assurances that it would.

In view of our concern over the potential adverse effects of the Garrison project, as currently envisaged, we are of course pleased to learn, if the press reports are accurate as to the contents of this document, that the Bureau of Reclamation is examining alternatives to the current project. However, I would note that our ongoing discussions with the United States are being conducted at government-to-government level, and not at the level of the Bureau of Reclamation. I am confident that no significant information relevant to the Garrison project as it affects Canada will be withheld by either side, in keeping with the traditional candour and frankness which characterizes our exchanges with the United States.

The United States has assured us that no decision on construction involving any diversion of water into the Souris Basin would be undertaken prior to 1978. United States officials have further stated that, under the present timetable, construction of the Velva Canal is not scheduled to begin until 1980, and construction on the Souris River is not to begin until 1981. In this regard we are confident that the United States will honour its long standing pledge that no project construction potentially affecting waters flowing into Canada would be undertaken unless it were clear that the United States could meet its obligation under Article IV of the Boundary Waters Treaty not to pollute water crossing the boundary "to the injury of health or property" in Canada. We are, of course, in continuing consultation with the United States government on the question of project schedules as they might affect Canada. We shall, however, seek official re-affirma-