

Oral Questions

months. Today, we sent out a letter to all hon. members advising them that the results of 13 of those 16 polls are available this very afternoon. We shall make them public at the request of interested parties. We have no intention of printing them out for everyone because they are very voluminous but all those who want copies of those polls can get in touch with the Canadian Unity Information Office.

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[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**NIAGARA RIVER—DISCHARGE OF CONTAMINATED WATER**

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment. As he well knows, the SCA chemical waste service company of New York has been granted an American permit, from the state of New York, to build a pipeline which will discharge millions of gallons of contaminated water into the Niagara River. He will also know that many Canadian municipalities draw their drinking water from that same river. Will he tell the House whether he, the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Prime Minister, or anyone else in the Canadian government, has made a vigorous representation to the United States government to have that permit rescinded?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment): Yes, Madam Speaker, there have been vigorous representations made to the United States government in relation to this issue. These representations, first of all, are to ensure that the U.S. government accepts and will maintain its international obligations under the Great Lakes Water Treaty, a commitment which they have made, and second, to ensure that the Environmental Protection Agency itself reviews materials which have been presented to the state of New York hearings. As the hon. member knows, I, too, made a commitment that our engineers and scientists would examine the material which has been presented to the New York authorities. We have done this and I have issued a report of their findings.

In this regard I would like to salute the efforts of my hon. friend from Niagara Falls, who yesterday referred this whole matter to the IJC, I believe.

Mr. McMillan: A supplementary question for the minister. Would the hon. gentleman be prepared to table in the House any written representations made by him or by the government to his counterparts in the United States, which would confirm to the concerned people in Canada, who doubt the government is taking the action that it promised in the election campaign, that action is, in fact, being taken?

Mr. Roberts: Madam Speaker, I will certainly look into that. I am not sure if all the representations are written. I have met with Mr. Costle, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, at least three times and have made

representations to him directly. I will investigate and see what written follow-up has been made to those to see if it is appropriate to present them to the House. In that event I would relay the contents to the hon. member, who I know is interested in this matter.

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AGRICULTURE**INQUIRY WHETHER LEVEL OF POULTRY IMPORTS
RENEGOTIATED**

Hon. John Wise (Elgin): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture, a minister who has contributed his fair share to the broken promises of his government. A prime example of this would be the tax on Ontario wines. I would refer also to his position on chicken imports. Because of the lack of appropriate action on his part, imports increased from about five million pounds to a level of about 65 million pounds. We moved in, established import levels and we reduced the level of these imports by 22 million pounds.

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Wise: I am coming to my question, Madam Speaker. The minister indicated very clearly that he would renegotiate that level and that it would be reduced. I ask the minister—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I suppose the hon. member does have a question, and if so he should ask it now.

Mr. Wise: Well, I have posed the question, Madam Speaker. I am sure the minister does not find it necessary for me to repeat the question. He made a very definite promise to renegotiate that level and to reduce it. Has the hon. gentleman delivered on that promise or does it still remain today a broken promise?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Well, Madam Speaker, the hon. member made several accusations in his preamble to what he called a question. The matter has not been without some investigation. We find, for instance, that the Ontario government makes twice as much as the federal government does on wine taxes. If he wants to be factual he should be factual about that also.

He talks about poultry. Poultry imports are less this year. Right now there are inquiries being made in Canada about poultry moving into the United States because we have provided that stable kind of government which leads to the kind of income for farmers in the poultry business that I know the hon. member supported before he was a minister. When he was a minister he also supported that kind of market operation. The Americans are over here now because they have been producing poultry for over a year at below cost of production, so they are now making inquiries from Canada and asking: Can we buy poultry from you? The trade is switched in a different way, mainly because our producers are economically better off; they are viable, economic entities. So if the hon.