

SPORTS

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, Olympic gold medalists Kerrin Lee-Gartner and Mark Tewksbury were chosen outstanding Canadian athletes by the Sports Federation of Canada last night. Lee-Gartner of Calgary won the Velma Springstead award as Canada's female athlete of the year. Tewksbury, also of Calgary, took home the Norman H. Crowe Award as the top male athlete.

Several other Canadian athletes were also honoured at the federation's annual awards banquet. The gold medal winning women's eight rowing team from Barcelona was team of the year. Nicolas Gill of Montreal won the Viscount Alexander award as top junior male athlete. Nancy Drolet of Drummondville won the Elaine Tanner award as the top junior female athlete.

A friend and colleague, Alwin Morris, was also awarded the Johnny F. Bassett award for exemplary community service, a recognition for all his work in developing indigenous sports programs helping youth across Canada.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating all these outstanding Canadians, athletes who in their own special way have always made us proud to be Canadian, and the Sports Federation of Canada for its work and recognition.

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WATER DIVERSION

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the provincial government in Manitoba is planning to continue with its proposed Assiniboine River water diversion.

According to the Supreme Court ruling on the Oldman Dam case in January 1992, the federal government may do an environmental review when there is an affirmative regulatory power involved. The Minister of the Environment confirmed his acceptance of this view when I asked him about this in May 1992.

The fact that federal funding for this water diversion comes from the western diversification fund and the prairie farm rehabilitation administration, that the Assiniboine is a navigable river, that aboriginal land will be

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affected, and that irrigation in one region is being favoured over potable use in another, gives the federal government plenty of jurisdiction and responsibility for a proper assessment.

A basin-wide review is necessary to study the cumulative effect of this development. There will be a reduction in the amount of water and an increase in the concentration of chemical pollutants already in the river from agricultural run-off and industry, namely from the American based pharmaceutical company, Ayerst.

I call on the Minister of the Environment to live up to the image he is fond of projecting in his leadership campaign and order the assessment.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

RUSSIA

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Prime Minister.

We know that President Yeltsin has not yet asked for a change of venue for the meeting in Vancouver in 10 days, but today the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia said: "We will prepare this meeting to take place in Moscow. This will be a symbol of support for our country".

In light of the statement of the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, will the Canadian government indicate that Canada will not be offended at all if the United States and Russia were to move the venue to Moscow?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I indicated yesterday that we would not in any way be offended at all if the venue were moved anywhere that would benefit the bilateral arrangements and the support for President Yeltsin and his democratic reform.

We are happy to make all the arrangements to accommodate both parties in Vancouver. Should either or both decide that it could best be held and more advantageously be held for President Yeltsin elsewhere, we would be happy to accommodate that.