

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

POSITION OF MEMBER FOR OTTAWA—VANIER

**Mr. Paul Gagnon (Calgary North):** Mr. Speaker, during Question Period on Wednesday the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) attacked my plan to take a Minister to court over discriminatory hiring and promotional policies.

The same Hon. Member voted for Bill C-72, not only on Wednesday but also on Thursday.

Clause 39 of Bill C-72 outlaws the kind of discriminatory practices that I find so abhorrent. The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier cannot have it both ways. Either he supports non-discriminatory employment and advancement, as stated in Clause 39 of Bill C-72, or he supports preferential treatment. Which is it? That Member should make up his mind.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

LAKE MICHIGAN—PROPOSED DIVERSION OF WATER IN UNITED STATES

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to either the Acting Minister of the Environment or the Acting Minister for External Affairs. I would like to point out that, on a day when most of the country is sweltering in above 30 degree weather, and from one end to the other most of the country is wracked with serious drought, the dramatic importance of water as an essential resource is uppermost in every Canadian's mind, yet the Government is contradictory and confusing in its responses and answers.

We would like to pose some questions to determine exactly what the position of the Government is on the very crucial issue of the proposed Great Lakes water diversion. Yesterday we heard from the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs that the Government had made representations, yet External Affairs officials cannot tell us what those representations are.

I would like to direct the following question to whomever is in a position to answer. At the ministerial level, the level of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, or the Prime Ministerial level, will the Government immediately contact the U.S. administration and clearly state that Canada will not give concurrence to any diversion whatsoever of water from the Great Lakes basin, and nip this whole proposal in the bud, and make it unilaterally clear on our side that there can be no diversions of Canadian water or water affecting Canadian rights as proposed under the Great Lakes water diversion?

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member

## Oral Questions

for that question. As was stated in the House yesterday, Canada's position is, by virtue of a number of treaties, that no diversion of water can take place from the Great Lakes system without our consent. That is categorical and straightforward.

With respect to the position taken by the Government, again it was pointed out yesterday that representations have been made to American officials in Washington on behalf of Canada, outlining our concerns in this regard. I am able to report to the Hon. Member that today our Ambassador to the United States is delivering to the State Department a specific reiteration of Canada's position in the most basic terms so that there can be no misunderstanding by any person on either side of the border with respect to our position.

We have been very cognizant of our responsibilities, and we will maintain Canada's position and make it quite clear with respect to any possibility, any plan, any tentative plan, or any project which might involve water diversion.

● (1120)

## CANADIAN POSITION

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the fact that the Government, by today at least, has taken the action requested yesterday in the House by having the Ambassador make representations.

Considering the precedent established in 1983 when the then Government filed a reference with the International Joint Commission stating that not only was Canada to be consulted but that there could be no unilateral decision, can the Minister tell us if the note being delivered by the Canadian Ambassador makes it very clear that Canadian rights that are essential in this project must be recognized and honoured, and that there should be no consideration of this project whatsoever by any American authority because Canadians are saying no right now?

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that this is a proposal—I think it is fair to describe it in that term—with respect to diversion. I think the representations we have made today will indicate that we are very firmly of the view that nothing can happen without our consent and there is no consent forthcoming. It is as simple as that. There is no further bottom line required.

The Minister of the Environment yesterday made reference to his view of the proposal. I think we have given a categorical statement to the American authorities, and all Canadians join with the Government in our position that this is a very serious question, one about which the Government of Canada should give a very strong message to the United States.

CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT—REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC WATER EXEMPTION

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, while the Minister is in the mood to issue strong