

Oral Questions

with an action plan setting forth the Conservative Government's commitment to promoting official languages in this country?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the action plan was already included in Bill C-72. The action plan is being implemented. The government's commitment is firm, and at the appropriate time, after full consultation with the parties concerned, we shall table the regulations in the House, in such a way that they are fair and equitable for all Canadians and are accepted by all linguistic communities in this country.

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LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. The Innu are once again before the courts. They are asking for an injunction to stop low-level flights.

The minister is aware that these flights are considered to be hazardous to the people of Labrador and to the environment. Will the minister finally demonstrate he is truly convinced that it is important to protect the environment and will he intervene to put a stop to these low-level flights?

[*English*]

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I will respond to that question. Obviously I cannot comment on a case that is before the courts.

As the hon. member knows, with respect to the proposed NATO flight training centre, we have indicated that no plans would proceed until there has been a full environmental review and that we would abide by the decisions of that review.

With respect to the existing low-level flights which are going on at Goose Bay, that comes about as a result of agreements which have been signed with our allies going back a number of years. We have agreed to introduce mitigative measures, to introduce monitoring to ensure that we avoid areas with wildlife or with people and to ensure that that activity is carried out in a very responsible manner.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of the Environment.

Will the minister co-operate with his colleagues, since environmental issues require joint action from different ministries? If the minister is serious about the environment then he should undertake to do this.

I want to raise another matter with the minister. In his discussion paper tabled last week there are several paragraphs on the Arctic.

We know from many other studies that have occurred before that the Arctic has been largely ignored and that, for example, two-thirds of the children on Broughton Island are suffering from unsafe levels of PCBs in their blood. We need action on the environment now, and we need action in the north.

For example, Inco has offered to assist the Soviet Union to reduce pollution. PCBs are a serious source of pollution in the Arctic. Since we have an international agreement with 17 countries, I am asking the minister if he will move now to discuss with these western countries changing the agreement on transferring technology to the Soviet Union so that we can deal with these serious Arctic problems?

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the New Democratic Party can see this consultation document is quite complete and sweeping in its scope. The Arctic has been dealt with in the consultation document.

The consultation process will allow us to put different options before Canadians concerning a comprehensive Arctic policy. As we know, the Prime Minister signed agreements with the Soviet Union during his last visit to that country, so we are heading in the right direction concerning the Arctic.

I admit we have much more to do. I hope we will have the support of Canadians to do it at the end of the consultation process.