

Supply

With respect to the PCB spill, I hope the Minister of Transport will have something to say about why in his protective directive that he issued on Friday, if I understood it correctly, he did not require the kind of convoy that seems to me would be in order.

Mr. Mazankowski: Convoy? What for?

Mr. Blaikie: So that if something is spilling out, someone would notice. You would not need to have a family of four in a family vehicle to notice it.

Mr. Mazankowski: Get off it.

Mr. Blaikie: If the Minister thinks that is an unrealistic demand, he is free to get up and say so. That is fair enough. It is an idea that was being thrown around. It is not included. Perhaps the Minister can say why he does not think that is necessary. That would seem to be fair ball. Maybe that is what he will do.

With respect to the regulations, I wonder if the Minister could clarify what the regulations that come into effect on July 1 will be. There has been some misapprehension about what those regulations will do. The other day in committee I asked what the regulations would do. I believe a false impression is being given, perhaps not deliberately, that the regulations which come into effect on July 1 would have dealt with all aspects of this Bill. All they would have dealt with would have been the speed and the accuracy with which people responded to the spill. They would not have had anything to do with preventing the spill.

As I understand, the regulations pertaining to the container itself will not come into effect until long after July 1. That comes with the next set of regulations to come into effect. I believe it was 1980 when we passed the transportation of dangerous goods legislation. We look forward to July 1, 1985 when a certain set of regulations will come into effect. Those regulations which would have enabled a comprehensive regulatory response to this event are still yet to come, even after July 1. It makes one wonder how long it takes. The Bill was passed in 1980. In 1985 we still do not have the regulations to deal with the problem.

Perhaps the Minister could comment on that. I know he will want to blame the previous Liberal administration. Maybe that had a lot to do with it. However, there must be some other reason why it is taking so long. I hope the Minister will address, in his new responsibilities as Minister of Transport, how we can decrease the time between legislative action and regulatory action so that we do not find ourselves in the position in which we so often find ourselves of something having happened, we thought we had legislation to deal with it but we did not because the regulations were not yet in place. At least, in this case, with respect to federal legislation, we had the legislation proclaimed and the regulations in process. But the Ontario Government did not have the decency to pass the legislation and get on with the regulations. That is where it stands on the matter. It is something for which I hope it will soon pay a political price.

• (1530)

Mr. Hovdebo: Mr. Speaker, I want to return to the Hon. Member's remarks just before lunch when he established the basis for a federal Government policy. Could the Member expound on that? As environment seems to be a divided area, what does he feel the federal Government's responsibility should be and what direction does he think the policy should take?

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I think that the Federal Government ought to feel more responsible, and indeed ought to have more responsibility than it now assumes. From the first time I heard of this, I assumed that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski), by virtue of the fact that it was a question of interprovincial transport, had a mandate to deal with it. I realize that the responsibility for administering this area has devolved to the provinces, but if we have learned anything from this, it is that if a cargo of dangerous goods must pass through several jurisdictions in order to get from point A to point B, this is not the best way to go about it. We have learned that it provides all kinds of opportunities for error and misrepresentation. If the federal Government is serious, it will have to take a tough look at how the dangerous goods legislation is being administered to see if there is an opportunity for a greater federal role.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a quick comment as to whether the responsibility should be dual or separate.

After the court decision on bus pickups in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia was made, the Hon. Robert Winters, who at that time was Minister of Transport in the Liberal Government, asked all provincial Ministers to a meeting. The provincial Ministers of Highway and of Transport from across the country gathered in Ottawa for that meeting, and I was among them. At that time, the Hon. Robert Winters said that while the legislation placed the responsibility on the Minister of Transport, he wanted to delegate it completely to provincial Ministers. I remember one of the provincial Ministers asking him whether, if it was delegated, it would mean that the federal Ministers would interfere after the provinces had started administering the legislation. Mr. Winters said no, that that would definitely not be the case. He said that the full responsibility would be that of the provincial Governments.

I thought that I should outline that event. If Mr. Winters had not said that, the provincial Ministers would not have accepted the responsibility. All the provincial Ministers who were present at that time accepted the responsibility and have been carrying it since. I believe that the comments which have been made by the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) are in line with those which were made by the Hon. Robert Winters.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate knowing what happened previously. The Hon. Member is senior to me and I am fortunate to be able to learn from him. Certainly, it is the practice that if something is delegated, a commitment is made