

Oral Questions

into account the fact that the present methods used to soak up the oil are clearly insufficient?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, I would like my hon. colleague from Gatineau—La Lièvre to know that I have been on the site since the outset of this unfortunate incident until 6:30 this morning. The federal government has cooperated fully with the Quebec government. Officials from Environment Canada were on site on Wednesday, as well as officials from Health and Welfare Canada, Agriculture Canada and the Department of National Defence. We have answered favourably to all of the requests made by the Quebec government.

Mr. Paradis tells us is keeping us informed regarding the pumping of the oil, and the hon. member will know that we are dealing with a provincial jurisdiction here. The Quebec government is therefore trying its best to contain the oil within the limits of the area where the tires are. But, if it were to ask us for further help, we would be there on behalf of the federal government.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Surely the minister will agree that the government's tire recycling research assistance program falls short of the mark. We now have proof. Will the minister set up a real program to boost research into and development of new used tire recycling technologies?

Hon. Marcel Danis (Minister of State (Youth), Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House): Madam Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity offered by the hon. member to thank the volunteer firemen who have now been working non-stop for three days at Saint-Amable.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Danis: Madam Speaker, I also noticed a rare occurrence—several firewomen battling the blaze.

An hon. member: Hear, hear.

Mr. Danis: In answer to my colleague's question, Environment Canada officials will meet with their provincial counterparts to draft a policy. Even though the matter falls within provincial purview, I suggest that in

the interest of Canadians everybody should get involved, and the Minister of the Environment is doing his best to solve the problem. He has done an excellent job until now and I am sure he will maintain his performance.

• (1150)

[English]

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister.

The Minister of the Environment has now made a commitment that Canada will stabilize its carbon dioxide emissions at 1988 levels by the year 2000. The Minister of Energy, however, has said that it is premature to set these levels.

Which minister speaks for the government?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, as we know, the Minister of the Environment attended a very important international conference in Bergen, Norway. He made some very important contributions to that conference in statements and commitments on behalf of Canada which establish targets with regard to the control and elimination of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.

It is the Minister of the Environment who spoke for the government at the conference. These are federal commitments.

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister since I did not get an answer to my first question.

Will the Prime Minister please tell Canadians his government's position? Is it to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions at 1988 levels by the year 2000, as stated by the Minister of the Environment, or is it to go slow, as stated by the Minister of Energy?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of Forestry): Madam Speaker, certainly the initial steps will require the industry and others that emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere to develop new systems, techniques and processes in manufacturing and other areas to arrest the growth and expansion of the emission of such gases, and then to operate and work collectively with the rest of the world to establish targets for the elimination of harmful gases.