

Oral Questions

Mr. Gurbin: Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is also directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I think most Canadians now know that we have a problem, or certainly an arising problem, in terms of energy supply. That is precisely the point. The effect or impact of energy pricing on supply is one factor and on conservation it is another factor. In addressing the supply problem, could the minister tell the House what impact he feels pricing has on the development of the alternative supplies we must have to replace oil which is not there because of the government's energy pricing program? Are we backing ourselves into a position where not only do we have subsidization of every energy system in the country, but also a rationing system?

[Translation]

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I once again thank the hon. member for his question. Of course when we prepared the National Energy Program we kept in mind the view expressed by the hon. member, namely that we must promote the development of alternative energy sources to eliminate eventually the need to subsidize available forms of energy through public funds. The advantage of the National Energy Program is that it clearly shows the prices that we shall have to pay for oil and gas in the next ten years. For instance, the price of oil will double within four years and will nearly quadruple by the end of this decade. This is a clear indication to the industry and those interested in alternative forms of energy that they may make specific plans and market new products or alternative energy sources which will certainly be competitive in oil, as they already know the level of prices they will be facing in 1985, 1987 and 1990. I believe this is the wisest policy for us to follow.

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● (1150)

[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DUMPING OF RADIOACTIVE TAILINGS BY RIO ALGOM MINES

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. Would he explain to the House why AECD has allowed Rio Algom Mines of Elliot Lake to dump on a continuous basis—24 hours a day—low-grade radioactive tailings into lakes which were once pure and natural, an environmental tragedy that over the last quarter century has destroyed the entire Serpent River system in northern Ontario?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, generally I have confidence in the AECD supervision of that process, but I shall investigate the information which the hon. member has brought to my attention today and report back to him.

Mr. Blackburn: Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister. Does the government intend to allow Rio Algom to build several proposed dams, some out of radioactive tailings, in order to reverse the flow of water in several streams which could easily result in the destruction of Elliot Lake's most popular recreational lake, Lake Dunlop?

Mr. Roberts: Madam Speaker, from the point of view of my responsibilities I would be concerned that, if any such development is to take place, it be done in a way which is consonant with the safe protection of the environment, and I would essay every course of action to ensure that this took place.

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FITNESS AND AMATEUR SPORT

TERMINATION OF NATIVE SPORT AND RECREATION PROGRAM

Hon. Steven E. Paproski (Edmonton North): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport. The minister is not giving the National Indian Brotherhood the \$1.2 million for recreational activities which was allocated in this year's estimates. Many of the programs are already under way. Why is the minister discriminating against these people?

Hon. Gerald Regan (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question and particularly for his concern in relation to the Indian people. Some years ago the Department of Fitness and Amateur Sport was authorized to carry out an experimental program which involved expenditures, and for the past year expenditures reached approximately \$1.2 million, to cover status and non-status people in the country in the recreational and athletic field.

After being in existence for some years, a decision has been taken with respect to the program. The department, as the hon. member is well aware since he was the former minister, is very small and compact and does not have representatives in all the different parts of the country. This department is poorly structured to carry out supervision or monitoring of the effectiveness of these programs and how they are carried out. As a consequence a decision has been taken that a similar amount of money will be utilized for other purposes related to the health and welfare of the Indian people.

Mr. Paproski: Madam Speaker, the minister's statement is neither candour, nor rhetorical, nor tongue in cheek; he speaks with a forked tongue.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Regan: You have to be nicer than that to me.