

*Oral Questions*

We have prepared a national inventory.

And a few minutes later, he said the inventory was being prepared. My question is, where is the national inventory of PCB storage facilities? Will all Members receive a copy of this inventory tomorrow, before they go back to their ridings?

[English]

**Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I hope the Hon. Member for Davenport realizes that the inventory that has been prepared is not specific to the Saint-Basile-le-Grand fire and explosion.

The Department of the Environment has a current, regularly updated inventory of storage sites across the country for PCBs. In light of the widespread interest in this subject, following the accident in Saint-Basile-le-Grand I have caused to have established an interdepartmental mechanism within the federal Government to identify and to update the list of all federal sites for PCB storage facilities.

We are working hand in glove with the provinces to ensure that our national inventory of provincial sites is also as complete as possible.

I am pleased to report to the House that, earlier today, I was talking with the Hon. Edward Connery, the Minister of the Environment for the Province of Manitoba. He is the current Chairman of the Council of Resource and Environmental Ministers. At my request he will convene a federal-provincial conference, a special meeting, within days to review that inventory and to make arrangements for its release.

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[Translation]

## HEALTH

### TESTS FOR FURANS AND DIOXIN—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Yesterday, after the Minister's reply that the Department of Health's disease control laboratory was carrying out tests on blood samples and samples of mother's milk, a subsequent check of this information revealed that the information the Minister gave us was false. The laboratory referred to by the Minister was not the right laboratory, and the laboratory that was supposed to do the testing hasn't started yet.

This morning Dr. Weber, head of the laboratory of the Quebec Department of Health which has the samples, confirmed that none of the calls made to the federal Department of National Health and Welfare since last Friday had been returned. Why did the Minister give us the wrong information, why was his information inaccurate, since the testing for furans and dioxins has not yet started?

[English]

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I spoke to my Assistant Deputy Minister of Health at the Health Protection Branch yesterday prior to Question Period. He advised me that some samples of cows milk have been taken for the federal Government, and that testing is being done specifically for furans and dioxins.

In respect to breast milk, I understand that the Quebec Government has advised nursing mothers to stop nursing and to attend at one of the Quebec hospitals to have their milk tested. I believe that is in conformity with what I stated yesterday when the Hon. Member asked a similar question.

[Translation]

### ANALYSES OF BLOOD AND MOTHER'S MILK—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont):** Of course the Quebec Department of Health can ask mothers not to nurse their children, but that is beside the point. Did the Department of National Health and Welfare do an analysis of blood samples and samples of mother's milk? His answer was yes, and that is totally inaccurate.

• (1425)

[English]

I do not think the Minister's answer is acceptable. Why does the Minister continue to assert that the tests have been carried out? The laboratory which he said yesterday was conducting the tests is the wrong laboratory. The laboratory that should be conducting the tests has not even returned the calls made on behalf of the Government of Quebec. The director of the Food Directorate, Dr. Kirkpatrick, told us this morning that nothing was being done. Why is the Minister misinforming this House and the people of Saint-Basile-le-Grand?

**Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I am not misinforming the House. With respect to breast milk, I gave the Member the information. It goes back to the provincial jurisdiction concerning health.

As I said yesterday, the federal Government with epidemiology and the LCDC are standing by ready to help. Additionally, as I said yesterday to the Hon. Member, the information that I conveyed to her was information that I received from the Assistant Deputy Minister. I will check further as to what additional tests are being done by the Health Protection Branch and I will be willing to give that information to the Member as well.

I do not think the Member should be making statements categorically because I made statements very clearly with respect to what information I received from the Department.