

Oral Questions

Mr. Mulroney: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker I am sure it got lost in the translation. Obviously, our record in this area and others will be examined. I look forward to an examination of our record on the environment by Canadians who will contrast this field of acid rain with what took place in the years that preceded our swearing in. In particular, I suppose they will want to contrast that record with what I think you will admit is the really quite deplorable record of the Hon. Member who is posing the questions. He should be ashamed of himself.

Mr. Caccia: I am afraid the Prime Minister got lost in research and demonstration rather than in substance.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. According to U.S. Representative Henry Wexman: "The Prime Minister is selling out the Canadian people and the Canadian environment". That is what he said yesterday. How can the Minister of the Environment stay in his job, calling for cuts in U.S. acid rain, when the Prime Minister agrees gleefully with President Reagan on more research and demonstration?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Davenport keeps referring to the \$5 billion program confirmed yesterday by the President as a research program. He knows better.

Mr. Caccia: Read the Envoys' Report.

Mr. McMillan: In fact, his statements to that effect are made no more true just through repetition.

I noticed in the *The Ottawa Citizen* today an article in which U.S. Energy Secretary John Herrington is quoted as saying that the program will be: "—tailored as much as possible to projects that demonstrate equipment which will reduce chemicals from existing coal-burning plants—". The program is not for research. It is not for basic and fundamental research. It is designed to reduce acid rain-causing emissions in the United States that do irreparable harm to the Canadian environment. I think the Hon. Member should keep that in mind.

● (1425)

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): My question is also directed to the Prime Minister. He talks about celebrating yesterday. Well, nine million people living around the Great Lakes were not celebrating when a report was released which showed that the situation is actually getting worse rather than better with respect to water quality in the Great Lakes. Does the Prime Minister not agree with the suggestion of the Liberal Party that a super fund to clean up the Great Lakes is critical at this point in time so we can stop further deterioration in the quality of water in the Great Lakes?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Hon. Member is not aware of the fact that I have made public statements on behalf of the Government of Canada very favourably predisposed to the idea of a super fund. In fact I have met with the Canadian Chemical Producers' Association a number of times following up on its indication to me and to the Government that for its part it would be eager to explore with us, with Ontario and with other jurisdictions, the possibility of a multi-party fund.

For our part, we are providing leadership in this area. We think—

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): But no money.

Mr. McMillan: We think the polluters should pay the costs of damage to the environment. We are seeking from the chemical industry itself, which bears responsibility for much of the pollution, funds for that purpose.

Ms. Copps: Believe me, I have a file full of words from this particular Minister with respect to the Hamilton Harbour. I do not need any more of his words.

POLLUTION OF WINDERMERE BASIN IN HAMILTON HARBOUR

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): The Minister is so serious about the problem. When the IJC cited the Hamilton Harbour and, in particular, the Windermere Basin, as one of the most severe hot spots in the Great Lakes with PCB levels up to 68 times the acceptable level, why did the Minister, in his letter to me, refuse the request from the city, the region and the provincial Government, for a \$1.25 million federal contribution to help clean up this mess? We want action. We want funds. We do not want more rhetoric.

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member has such an aversion to rhetoric, I do not know why she makes a career out of it in this House.

That aside, I have met with the mayor of Hamilton, with the head of the regional municipality of Hamilton—Wentworth, with the head of the Hamilton Harbour Commission and with the Minister of the Environment for Ontario, to explore ways in which the federal Government could join with those jurisdictions in a clean-up of the Windermere Basin. I recognize it as a very serious problem. I am taking it seriously. I am exploring every possible contribution the federal Government can make to that end.

I think it is incumbent upon the Hon. Member to recognize the very good work which the federal Government is doing in this area and which it has committed itself to doing in future.

UNITED STATES PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question concerns the same subject. I will agree with the Minister that this Government has done something about acid rain and we give the Government credit for it, and I mean