

of the international character of capital markets. So if the hon. member wants to live as part of the world community, he should understand that there are certain realities which flow from that membership in the world economy. I draw to his attention that simple fact, which he obviously failed to learn even during his short period in office.

* * *

● (1425)

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT FROM ACID RAIN

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of State for Science and Technology and the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday his department released a report which revealed alarming levels of pollution occurring in Canada, much of it coming from cross-border pollutants. For example, some 80 per cent of acid rain comes from the United States, resulting in the following: in Ontario some 4,000 lakes have been destroyed; the salmon industry in Nova Scotia has been destroyed; farmland in western Canada is now being increasingly polluted.

Considering the United States just recently elected a new president who has made it clear that he is indifferent to pollution, what precisely does the Government of Canada have in mind to protect our environment?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, the situation described in the report is extremely serious. Perhaps the word "destroyed" which the hon. gentleman used is not appropriate, but certainly lakes have been very markedly affected. We are continuing our efforts in relation to the United States. As I think the hon. gentleman knows, we have signed a memorandum of intent with the United States government. Discussions are already well under way for the establishment of a treaty of accord with the United States. We will continue with those efforts. I do not think it is wise at this time to prejudge the response of the new American administration when it takes office on January 20. We intend to proceed as actively and quickly as we can in reaching an agreement with the United States.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, with specific reference to the 18-month deadline to which the minister referred, considering that the president-elect indicated that he will review their legislation from the point of view of taking away whatever tough controls exist in controlling pollution and that the new Republican chairman of the United States Senate energy committee is widely known in the United States for being completely indifferent to pollution, could the minister give us any reason at all for believing that the 18-month optimism he just expressed has any hope of being realized?

Mr. Roberts: Yes, Madam Speaker. The optimism is based on the facts of the situation. The acid rain problem is an extremely serious one, not only for Canada but for the United

Oral Questions

States. The United States government's own figures estimate that the cost to the United States, simply in terms of the erosion of buildings, is between \$2 billion and \$4 billion a year. When the new administration sees the facts of the situation and receives the results of the kind of research published yesterday, I think it will be led to the conclusion that our two countries together should proceed actively to deal with this problem.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, since the report indicated that a further 45,000 lakes are about to be destroyed and that in terms of freshwater fish none between Ontario and Newfoundland will remain in existence, is the minister telling the House that we will just sit back and optimistically hope that a new government, which has been elected in part on indifference to a pollution program, will provide answers for our alarming levels of pollution, or will he give us a commitment that he will come back to the House, at least before Christmas, with an alternative program to deal with this truly calamitous situation?

Mr. Roberts: Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman implies that nothing has been done; that is far from the case. As the House knows, we have very greatly increased the funds which we are placing at the disposal of research into acid rain and other acid precipitation problems. We have signed the memorandum of intent. Those discussions are continuing with the United States. We are expanding our research and impressing upon provincial governments the more rigorous exercise of limitation orders. That has already happened in relation to Inco. We are assessing the Falconbridge situation, and we are looking at Ontario Hydro plants. A considerable amount of activity has been undertaken in relation to our own efforts in Canada which contribute markedly to the acid rain problem.

Mr. Broadbent: Eighty per cent comes from the United States.

Mr. Roberts: The hon. gentleman is incorrect in saying 80 per cent; it is 50 per cent. Also he is incorrect in saying that 45,000 lakes are about to turn dead. I do not want to nit-pick on those errors because the conclusions of the report indeed are very serious, but we are acting within our own jurisdiction to the fullest extent and exploring every possible avenue to press the United States to co-operate with us in this very important venture.

* * *

● (1430)

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

CLOSURE OF CERTAIN CN EXPRESS TERMINALS IN ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Hon. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. In view of the announced intention of CN Express to terminate jobs which are badly needed and to close ten out of its 15 terminals in