

Oral Questions

Mr. Young: You don't know what he was going to ask.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. The Hon. Member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys has the floor.

Mr. MacLellan: My question is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Minister has finally admitted, through her telex yesterday to oil industry executives, that her market sensitive regime is not working and that Canadians are paying too much for gasoline. What guarantees can the Minister give that oil companies will pass along their savings to consumers, and when will this happen?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the Hon. Member is so negative about my attempts to assist Canadian consumers to receive full benefit of the world oil price decreases. I had looked for support from him on this issue.

Mr. MacLellan: Mr. Speaker, she has my support, if that is what she intends to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST FOR PRICE GUARANTEES

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton-The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister said:

I have communicated with industry executives to ensure that consumers get the full and fair benefit of the price declines which are in the system now.

That includes, I assume, those which are coming into the system. It is not unfair to ask her what guarantees she has that this will happen. What are these assurances, and when are Canadians going to get them?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the assurances are built into our new energy policy which is fair to consumers as well as producers, and is the opposite of the rigid regulatory system imposed by the Liberals under which gasoline prices increased 80 per cent from 32 cents a litre to 50 cents.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

WATER FILTRATION SYSTEMS IN SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex-Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment and is on the same subject as previous questions. It is an extremely crucial subject for the communities of southwestern Ontario. Is the Minister aware that Washington environmental experts have concluded that no studies whatsoever exist that probe the long-term cumulative effects of octadioxin? Will the Minister, therefore, protect our frightened communities in southwestern Ontario by share-costing with the Ontario Government the upgrading of filtration systems that are crucial in those communities?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to downplay the importance of the announcement that Jim Bradley made yesterday in Queen's Park. However, if the citizens in question are frightened, I think the Hon. Member has contributed as much as anyone else to that fright.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Murphy: Shame!

Mr. McMillan: The Hon. Jim Bradley, the Minister of the Environment of Ontario, said yesterday: "Drinking water supplies for all of these communities meet health-related objectives. I have the assurance of medical and toxicological experts that the levels do not pose a threat to human health".

The Hon. Jim Bradley made the announcement yesterday so that the information could be shared with the public in perspective. I urge the Hon. Member to take his advice. The situation is of concern in the sense that for the first time trace levels of dioxin have been found in water. Again, it is not because those substances in question were not there before; it is because science has reached the point of expertise of being able to detect them. That is the difference.

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[Translation]

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

FAMILY VIOLENCE INFORMATION CENTRE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In 1981, the Liberal Government gave \$500,000 per year, for a period of five years, to the Family Violence Information Centre. The Centre takes care of battered women and women who have been sexually assaulted.

Since the Conservative Government came to power, the Centre's budget has been cut by half, one-third of the staff has been let go, and the information bulletin is no longer published. Today, it seems that the Conservative Government is about to cut the Centre's budget altogether.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the Minister would inform the House whether the Government intends to continue subsidizing the Centre or whether family violence is something we can afford to ignore.

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the specific issue which the Member raises, that of family violence, including child abuse and the related conditions, remains a priority of the Government. With regard to the Family Violence Centre in the Department of National Health and Welfare, if she looks at the figures on a year-to-year basis for the next three years, she will find them to be quite different from what she said they were.