

Oral Questions

everything within our power to control acid rain as soon as possible.

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is right and we all know his interest on this great issue for Canada.

As a matter of fact, this vote moves us much closer to the opening of formal negotiations with the Americans. During last year, on many occasions, U.S. and Canadian officials have met to set up the framework and the essential elements of what the agreement could contain.

We think that those formal negotiations should begin very soon. We hope that it will be possible to conclude an agreement by the fall.

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HEALTH

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Health. I am a woman and I am very concerned about the Meme breast implant.

Why is the Minister of Health placing at risk all women in this country? The American manufacturer of this product has stated that household polyfoam is not designed for implantation within the human body.

Why is the minister not removing this product from the market? Why is he placing the women of this country at great risk?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that I am threatening the health of all the women in this country. That sort of an exaggeration does no credit to the hon. member.

Mr. Dionne: Why don't you turn your collar around?

Mr. Beatty: If the hon. member will pay attention—

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Get back on your tricycle.

Mr. Beatty: —the goal of all hon. members in the House, irrespective of which side of the House they sit on, should be to ensure the safety of all Canadians and not falsely create fear among Canadians. As a consequence, I would invite the hon. member to have a full

briefing with regard to this, to receive the information first before making false allegations of this nature.

For example, if the hon. member is referring to the University of Florida study, which was referred to by another hon. member earlier, any plastic subjected to very high temperatures, which do not exist in the human body, will break down into carcinogens. The University of Florida study has been discredited.

If hon. members on any side of the House would like to have the facts, I again repeat the offer to make the facts available to them. I would invite them, before making false allegations which unnecessarily frighten people, to get the facts.

Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean): Mr. Speaker, these are not my points of view. The points of view I am stating today come from research scientists in the minister's own health department, top scientists who have resigned because of this issue.

If I may be so bold, I wonder if this was something that was going to be implanted into the male body, would he be as concerned today?

This product is not being implanted in any Ottawa-Carleton hospital today. It is recognized in the Ottawa-Carleton region as a danger to women. Why, Mr. Minister, can you not remove this product from the market until it has been safely tested?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member indicates is that nothing will convince her that the implant is safe.

She suggested that somehow there is a matter of discrimination here, that if men were involved this product would be off the market, but because it involves women it is on the market. That sort of an allegation brings no credit to the hon. member at all.

The hon. member will know that Dr. Keon from Ottawa is studying the uses of polyurethane, not simply as it relates to breast implants but the degradation of all polyurethane used in implants. Polyurethane is used in a whole range of medical devices, used in both men and women. The health and safety of every Canadian, male or female, is essential to us.