

is also well aware of the fact that the administration in the U.S. backed away when faced with the problem of having to extract from their corporate taxpayers the moneys necessary to effect the clean-up which they themselves required as a result of their own actions.

Mr. Caccia: Yet they find the money to build nuclear submarines.

Mr. Deans: Yes, that is right, they find the money to build nuclear submarines. The priorities are really a bit of a puzzle to people such as myself, and I am sure to many others.

This debate gives us an opportunity to put into perspective what we are seeing. It is not a new debate. It is a debate about a problem which has been with us probably since the beginning of the building up of the banks of that particular river and Lake Ontario. However, this problem has reached the point where, unless there is an emergency attack upon it, and unless it happens now and not in 1995, the effect of allowing it to continue will be one of disaster. The timing required to clean up the great lake of Ontario, will be such as to make it virtually impossible for people to continue to draw their drinking water from it into the year 2000. There is more which needs to be done.

I have a couple of minutes left and I will finish my remarks when we resume at 2 p.m.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order. It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

[English]

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I understand I have only a couple of minutes left. I want to end where I started.

It is indeed an act of criminal proportions to pour into the Niagara River the industrial waste that is going into that river and it can only be treated as such. If we understand them correctly, we consider the proposals made by Mr. Thomas, the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to be in the main inadequate. In certain areas, they are a step in the right direction.

We agree that plans to pre-treat municipal industrial discharges of toxic chemicals into the Niagara River and plans to more strictly control and monitor companies discharging industrial waste into the same river are a step forward. The plans to determine whether or not cleanups are required at approximately 60 lesser known toxic waste dumps along or near the river are a step forward. However, when discussing specific proposals to clean up the largest and most dangerous

Supply

dump sites along the Niagara River including the Love Canal, Hyde Park, 102nd Street and the S-Site, Thomas apparently made it clear that EPA action does not envisage the actual digging up of the deadly toxins. These toxins are slowly seeping into the drinking water of almost six million people, four million of whom are Canadians. Instead, he is going to suck these up with some magic process he has not yet developed. The cleanup proposal outlined by Mr. Thomas is completely unacceptable.

I would call upon the Minister to make Mr. Thomas aware that the House of Commons, and I think I speak for most Hon. Members, will not accept anything less than an immediate start with adequate funds on the cleaning up of the mess that was created as a result of years of inactivity and negligence. If that cleanup is not undertaken, then we must find alternative ways of solving this extremely dangerous problem that has been allowed to develop over a number of years, notwithstanding the fact that information relative to the problem of the killing of Lake Ontario by Niagara River pollutants has been available. Unless that problem is resolved, we will not be able, when the time comes, to clean up that water sufficiently to find it suitable for human consumption.

Mr. Gurbin: Mr. Speaker, the question I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) relates to industries, and particularly those in the Hamilton area. I think the Hon. Member might be able to offer some comment on this.

The Hon. Member spent a fair amount of time during the part of his speech I heard talking about the industries and their disposal practices and techniques. He mentioned that industry was a major if not the major contributor to the problem with which we are faced regarding toxins in the Niagara River and the Great Lakes Basin in general. I think members of the NDP often have difficulty removing the stereotype from industries. I think there is a valid point to be made here. Are all industries the same?

When the Hon. Member refers to industry, does he mean every industry? I think there are many examples of industries which in fact exceed the guidelines established and limits imposed through regulation or other means. I wonder if the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain would care to reflect a little on whether or not industry is the only cause of the problem. I think it is at least fair to recognize the efforts that have been made by some industries which have had some success, and on the other hand to identify and do something about those industries which have not responded in that way?

• (1410)

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I take that question to be a serious one. Of course in part the answer is that not all industries are the same. It would be a little foolish for me to leave the impression that I believed that; I certainly do not. Certain industries have made an effort and have been assisted in the making of that effort by public funds. However, there are industries operating in Hamilton—and my colleague just