

[English]

HEALTH

ARSENIC LEVELS IN NATIVE POPULATION—SUGGESTED
PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Wally Firth (Northwest Territories): Mr. Speaker, I have a double-barrelled question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. It concerns his department's survey of arsenic levels in hair samples taken from residents of Yellowknife. Is the minister aware that the National Indian Brotherhood has conducted a similar survey which indicates a higher proportion of arsenic in people, especially in children. The survey shows arsenic at dangerous levels. Is the government prepared to introduce more strict regulations controlling emissions from the mine and to protect the workers in the mine, and is the minister prepared to have the mining companies compensate people who have been affected for the damage done to their health?

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, as regards the first part of the question, I have read in the press some references to a study conducted by the National Indian Brotherhood. I did not get any copy of that study. We have asked the Indian Brotherhood to get us a copy; my officials will surely look into it with great interest. Again, we will examine what precisely is the scientific base of that study and compare with the one already done by my department.

As for the second part, further studies are under way. I have already stated, following the publication of the first study, that more thorough studies have been launched, particularly on identified cases showing what appears to be a high arsenic rate; this applies particularly to workers of plants in that region, and it is in light of this second study that we will be able to assess the necessary measures.

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[English]

INFORMATION

ALLEGATION OF GOVERNMENT SECRECY—PROPOSAL RALPH
NADER BE CALLED AS WITNESS BEFORE COMMITTEE

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants in his capacity as co-chairman of the Committee on Regulations and other Statutory Instruments which is dealing with the question of government secrecy? Would the hon. member consider discussing with his co-chairman the possibility of calling Ralph Nader as a witness, in view of statements Mr. Nader has made about government secrecy in this country?

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCleave: —I hope that the famous bomb shelter has not shrunk so much that I will not be able to crawl into it.

Oral Questions

● (1440)

AIR TRANSPORT

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL COMMUNICATIONS—DATE OF
ANNOUNCEMENT OF POLICY ON BILINGUALISM

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport concerning the Bilcom report. On May 28 the minister said he was waiting for all representations regarding the use of bilingualism in air to ground flight communications. Has the minister received all the necessary representations, and if so, is he in a position to inform the House when the government, in the interest of public safety, will announce their policy in this regard?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

STUDY OF PROBLEMS OF CONSUMERS IN ISOLATED
NORTHERN COMMUNITIES—REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION OF
REPORT

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Is the minister prepared today to report on the progress of the study ordered by his department which was designed to canvass and monitor consumer groups and individuals in isolated northern communities in light of the very special problems they face?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I am not yet ready to give that answer, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

Mr. Oberle: In light of discussion on Bill C-2, which is presently before the committee, will the minister make the report public to enable members to make a judgment as to how his controversial bill might affect people in those isolated northern communities?

[Translation]

Mr. Ouellet: Mr. Speaker, when the report is received, I will look into the recommendations, and if there is need to publish them I will be glad to do so.

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[English]

HOUSING

INABILITY OF RURAL RESIDENTS TO OBTAIN LOANS FROM
CENTRAL MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION—
GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs. As the minister knows, rural residents and those in small villages are not able to get CMHC approved loans. Has the minister made any progress at changing