

Order Paper Questions

analyze surface vegetation imagery, maximum depth of the active terrain layer and the occurrence of permafrost, etc.

4. No.
5. Sovereignty and defence of North America.
6. The work relates to DND operations in northern Canada.

ENVIRONMENT—PCB RELEASES

Question No. 439—**Mr. Leggatt:**

1. In what locations, on what dates and how have P.C.B.s (polychlorinated biphenyls) been significantly released to the environment from supposedly closed systems?

2. What methods and procedures were used to contain the releases?

3. Has the government or any provincial government prosecuted anyone who has released P.C.B.s to the environment and, if so, what convictions resulted?

4. What methods has the government recommended to the provinces for the disposal of P.C.B.s?

5. Are there P.C.B. disposal sites in Canada and, if so, in which locations?

Mr. Mike Landers (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Environment)): 1 and 2. (a) Sheridan Creek, B.C.: between 1972 and June 1976 an unknown quantity of coolant escaped from buried capacitors. Discarded capacitors and contaminated earth were removed and sent to approved disposal area in the U.S.A. (b) Dowling, Ontario: November 9, 1973; train-truck collision caused derailment and rupture of cargo transformers; approximately 1000 gallons of transformer oil spilled onto the ground. Contaminated earth was initially removed in two stages and disposed of by encapsulation. Later sampling revealed high PCB levels in the vicinity of the original spill. In July 1977, the Ontario Environmental Appeal Board issued an order to excavate contaminated soil and to hold it in leak-proof containers until final disposal can be arranged. (c) Crookston, Minnesota: April 3, 1976; while pumping out a flooded powerhouse, one transformer was found to be leaking. An estimated 70-90 gallons of coolant were pumped with the flood water into the Red Lake River which meets the Red River 60 miles downstream at Grand Forks, North Dakota. Pumping into Red Lake River was stopped; contaminated flood water remaining in the powerhouse was removed for disposal in the U.S.A. (d) Regina, Saskatchewan: August, 13 1976; a pipeline, from a coolant storage tank to an electrical manufacturing plant, broke and 1500 gallons of coolant spilled onto the ground. Interceptor trenches and sumps were dug to collect water-coolant mixture. Contaminated liquids and earth were removed for disposal in the U.S.A. (e) Prince Rupert, B.C.: January 21, 1977; it is alleged that a transformer ruptured and approximately 200 gallons of coolant entered Porpoise Harbour via a water drainpipe. Contaminated sediment will be covered carefully to a maximum depth of approximately 35 feet and then capped for scour protection. (Dredging is considered to be environmentally unacceptable).

3. In the Prince Rupert case, the Crown has proceeded against Canadian Cellulose Company Limited on (16) charges of violations under the Fisheries Act. The intentions of or actions taken by provincial governments with respect to PCB

[Mr. Danson.]

spills are not known. Provinces are not obliged to report hazardous material spills under their jurisdiction to federal agencies.

4. The federal government has prepared interim guidelines for the management of waste materials containing P.C.B.'s. The guidelines recommend storage of the materials until such time as environmentally acceptable disposal methods have been approved or have been developed.

5. At the present time there are no licensed P.C.B. disposal sites or facilities in Canada.

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[English]

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated two days ago, it is our intention to raise a point of order to the propriety of two items included in Supplementary Estimates (A). In particular, I served notice on the House at that time that we took exception to vote 31a of Regional Economic Expansion and vote L56a of Transport. The point of order has to do with the general question of what are called \$1 votes, which has been dealt with a great many times over the years and was dealt with very extensively in March of this year.

At that time you made a ruling on the matter which was very clear and precise and with which we agree. May I quote from the March 22, 1977, issue of *Hansard*, where at page 4221 Your Honour said:

On the general question, it is my view that the government receives from parliament the authority to act through the passage of legislation and receives the money to finance such authorized action through the passage by parliament of an appropriation act. A supply item, in my opinion, ought not, therefore, to be used to obtain authority which is the proper subject of legislation.

That was a very clear and precise decision taken by Your Honour in March after a great deal of debate on both sides of the question by a great number of learned experts on House of Commons procedure. In light of that ruling, I should point out that vote 31a under Regional Economic Expansion, dealing with the Cape Breton Development Corporation, contains two parts. The first part of that appropriation calls for payment to the Cape Breton Development Corporation to be applied by the corporation in payment of the losses incurred in the operation and maintenance of the coal mining, related works and undertakings required by the corporation under section 9 of the Cape Breton Development Corporation Act.

● (1212)

In my opinion, that is a very proper, normal type of vote. It is an accepted part of estimates of the House. We have no objection to that vote. If the government wanted to appropriate more money to open up new mines in Cape Breton, indeed we would consider that as well.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: The vote continues by indicating "and notwithstanding section 31(2) of the act for grants to municipalities on Cape Breton Island not exceeding the amount equal to the