

## HEALTH

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health. It has been revealed this week that the Department of Health has secretly commissioned further studies into the Meme breast implant. Yet the official position of the department remains that of the Kerrigan report that women should not worry.

Given that the government-commissioned Kerrigan report has been widely discredited, even called a plagiarism by one leading researcher in the field, will the minister finally admit that his department has been misleading Canadian women on the safety of this implant, and will he withdraw this dangerous product from the marketplace until it is proven safe?

• (1440)

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, it would take more time than I have to correct all the inaccuracies in the hon. member's question. Let me, however, indicate a number of things to him.

First, we have not commissioned secret reports. A number of researchers have come to us to make proposals for research that they would like to do, which we have agreed to finance, and I think it is appropriate that we should do that. We have not had concerns which led us to commission reports.

Second, one of the reports that the member claims to be commissioned, which is being done by the Ottawa Heart Institute, is looking at all aspects of polyurethane in implants in Canada. It is not simply looking at the Meme breast implant.

Third, there have been some 12,000 Meme breast implants sold in Canada since 1984. The incidence of failure among the Meme is considerably lower than the failure rate among other breast implants. That should be a matter of which the hon. gentleman should be aware.

Additionally, there is a good deal of question about research that was alleged to have discredited the Meme when the hon. member gave his press conference earlier in the week.

I would like to make a proposal to the hon. member. Instead of going out and making false allegations, if the hon. member would like to have the facts, I would be

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pleased to have arranged for him a full briefing by officials within the department to give him the appropriate information so that he would have the information before making his allegations, instead of making his allegations first and seeking information after.

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing):** Mr. Speaker, both studies in the United States and in Canada show that this implant deteriorates within the body and produces carcinogenic products which then are distributed throughout the woman's body. There is no necessity to keep this product on the market while it is being investigated, none whatsoever.

Remembering that there are 60 cases in the United States and more than one in Canada in which this issue is being raised because of the safety of the product, what is more important to the minister: the profits of a distributor and a handful of plastic surgeons, or the safety and health of Canadian women?

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, the approach that is being taken by the hon. member is irresponsible. What he does is to frighten women and he does so in a way that is totally irresponsible because he has not taken the effort to get the information before making these allegations.

The House will recall that a minute ago I simply offered to the hon. member to give him a full briefing in this matter. He did not indicate his willingness to take up the briefing. I would indicate to him as well that the University of Florida study to which he refers has been largely discredited. He would have known that if he had bothered to check his facts first.

I would like to repeat that invitation to him. I will make the invitation as well to our colleague from Winnipeg North who, unlike the hon. gentleman, has been responsible in seeking information first before making false allegations.

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## ACID RAIN

**Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound—Muskoka):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. In light of the legislation passed last night in the United States Senate by a majority of 89 to 11, I am sure the minister is gratified and I would hope that his ministry will now be pursuing in every way with his provincial counterparts to ensure that we are doing