

We have to see the environment as a trust. We have to see this country and the beauty of it as something that is not inherited from our ancestors but borrowed from our children.

[*Translation*]

We should know in Canada that the resources of our planet are not inexhaustible—

[*English*]

—something that is capable of being damaged and damaged permanently. We have to forget the old Anglo-Saxon concept of title, that we can use everything on the earth just as we please.

I heard a babe calling in the Gallery earlier today. I was glad to be reminded of those for whom we are ultimately doing these things. It was something I learned early on in my political career from the Indian people who never exclude children from a meeting because they are the ones to benefit from whatever topic is under discussion.

In closing, I am reminded of the epitaph on the tombstone of the noted Georgian architect, Sir John Van Brugh. It reads: "Lie heavy on him earth for he laid many heavy loads on thee". Van Brugh was an architect who liked to build on a massive scale and in a grand style. We have laid many heavy loads on this earth of ours and it is up to all of us to show some leadership in lightening them.

Mr. Gurbin: I have a question for the Hon. Member, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry) for a reasonable and reasoned intervention. He mentioned two things to which I would like his response concerning activities at the local level. He may or may not be aware of or familiar with the reaction, response, or outline, an agreement on which was arrived at in consultation with the municipal, provincial and federal authorities. Could the Hon. Member comment on how he feels it would be appropriate, especially if one wanted a rapid response to a question that there is someone better than the local officer of health, someone better than the OPP, someone better than the fire department locally to deal with emergencies like this that could occur any time, any place, anywhere. Does the Hon. Member feel there is a better way of being able to arrive at that immediate response? Is the Hon. Member more familiar or does he know of any other cases than the cases of the people who were in the car who went to Manitoba? Does he have any additional information? The only other two cases of which we know of persons who came into skin contact with the transformer fluid were, first, that of a person who was changing a tire on his car after having driven through the oil spill, and the other was that of a person who cleaned a cat which had been soiled with it. Those are the other two cases of which we know, other than the people who were in the car. Twelve people telephoned Dr. Freisson, the local medical officer of health, who were concerned that they had in fact breathed in some fumes which might have contained PCBs. He has done the appropriate things in that regard and is following it up in the appropriate way. I wonder whether the Hon.

Supply

Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry) could respond to these two questions.

● (1750)

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Parliamentary Secretary. Obviously there is little capability for predicting incidents of environmental hazard or disaster before they occur. Therefore, the primary role for detection and for co-ordination lies with the local authority. When I was mayor of Sioux Lookout, I remember attending an emergency measures planning course with the then Mayor of Kenora, who is also the present mayor. I think the emergency measures organization under the aegis of the municipality is an appropriate model. In terms of the incidents of contact in this event, I will be happy to check my information and get back to the Parliamentary Secretary so that we can compare notes on the number of people who have been affected.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Vincent: Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry) on his comments. There are now certain guidelines, including some entitled "Guidelines on waste management of materials containing PCBs". I would like the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River to state his position on these guidelines. How does he see these guidelines being applied so that such incidents do not happen again and the guidelines are more generally and more strictly implemented?

[*English*]

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Vincent) for his question. Certainly it would appear to me that guidelines for compensation in such cases should be laid down. I do not feel that it is really a productive method to take cases on an individual basis, bearing in mind the number of cases of similar contamination which have occurred. Of course, the mercury pollution of the English-Wabigoon River in my own riding is another example. I feel that there should be some mechanism for environmental compensation tribunals so that people whose health has been affected or whose property has been damaged can have some form of less adversarial mechanism to which they could bring their claims. Similarly, the bonding and insurance of transporters and users of all potentially dangerous material should be examined to ensure that there is adequate coverage for the potential risks in the event of leakage or spillage.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I compliment the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Parry). Obviously he brings a local perspective to the question of spillage and the problems surrounding it. I compliment his on his contribution to the debate. Also I should like to compliment the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) on his contribution. They were constructive contributions. We know that we do not have all the answers but we have to learn from crises. One cannot always predict crises and how one will react, but I think their contributions have been useful.