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all very marginal activities that do not come to grips with the question of cutting the emissions.

I would like to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to what extent, in the establishment of the goals that are outlined or referred to in the third paragraph of the press release, namely that both had stated it is highly desirable to establish goals, to what extent the 24 recommendations outlined in the 1984 Niagara Toxic Chemical Committee report have been incorporated in the goals? Can he tell us that?

Mr. Gurbin: Mr. Speaker, I can respond to that question. What I have to tell him is that the American action plan, which flows from the agreement that will be reached between the Governments, hopefully including Ontario and New York, are the only specific things that we will have access to. If he is talking about all specific 24 recommendations, I have to tell him clearly that I never sat down and tried to put 1 to 24 against specific things. In that sense I cannot answer the question. We know that within a period of two weeks or less the specific action plan for their part will be produced. That is number one.

Number two, if he reads only the first paragraph of the communique, he will know that the agencies are committed to complete by July 1, 1987 the technical documentation of the pollution control measures needed to reduce direct discharges. That means specific targets and dates. He and I have already had a discussion over the technical problems there are now which make it impossible for Ontario, New York, or any other level of Government to say any more than that, because while there are very specific findings in specific areas, 61 or 66, whatever the number is, there is not agreement, nor even a complete way of evaluation. There has not been agreement on how the full loading is going to be evaluated at one end as compared to the full loading at the other end.

The Hon. Member will know there have been a variety of figures ranging from one to nine tonnes of total load in the system. For that reason, until that additional information is available, it would be irresponsible for anyone to try to do other than this ambitious and very action orientated commitment by July 1, 1987. It would be nice to be able to say more and be accurate. It is just not technically possible, and no one can say that it is.

Mr. Langdon: If I could start with just a brief comment to recognize the fact that the Parliamentary Secretary stressed—which I had in fact included in my notes to make as an aside—that the incinerator solution in Detroit is something that we feel is the result of the kind of forceful representation of our case to the United States that we would hope would routinely take place on these cross boundary issues. It is something very much appreciated.

Second, a brief preliminary point is just to note the point that I raised surreptitiously as a point of order, which is that it is not the Opposition which is claiming that the Great Lakes Basin is a pollution disaster point, but instead a neutral group of both Canadians and Americans. In the report of the Royal

Society of Canada and the National Research Council of the United States, they say their committee finds substantial evidence from the results of studies done by both the U.S. and Canada that the human population in the Great Lakes Basin is exposed to and accumulates appreciably more toxic chemical burden than other human populations in similarly large regions of North America for which data are available.

My question is to try to pin the Parliamentary Secretary down, because he once more has repeated the suggestion in his speech that, in fact, there is a commitment to a 50 per cent reduction by 1995 in toxic loadings with respect to the Niagara Escarpment.

I ask him specifically where in the press release, which is the only documentation we have and which I have in front of me, there is anything which even implies that that is a commitment? What we have instead, as I suggested, is a flim-flam statement that says, as an example, they suggest that a 50 per cent reduction may be achievable by 1995 or sooner. That is very nice, but it is not the kind of commitment which I am sure the Parliamentary Secretary, as a technical person, and others throughout the country would look to see as a real promise to achieve that goal.

Mr. Gurbin: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for the appreciation of the work that was accomplished in so far as the Detroit incinerator. I just mention in passing that another subject on the agenda was the progress on acid rain, and there are some good signs and some good activities in keeping with the commitments that have been made through the summit meeting with the President and the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). We have had an update on that, which we are encouraged by, and we look forward to additional actions in the near future. We also discussed some of the nuclear repositories that have been suggested and are keeping the Canadian position and concerns of that development very much in the forefront in our discussions with the United States. I can mention other aspects as well.

● (1620)

With respect to the second question, it is academic whether it was him or the Royal Society report. I was not attempting to discredit him or the Royal Society report, I was merely trying to give additional information. The academic aspect is that it does not take away from the problem in any way. That is not what I am trying to do. I am simply indicating that while it is as serious as everyone believes and we should be working as hard or harder than we are now, it does not seem to represent the same level in comparison to the other problems in North America.

Let me try again to make my point with regard to the 50 per cent objective. Our goal is to achieve 50 per cent by 1995 or sooner. It is impossible to set those precise targets and dates until we have a firm and complete data base from which to work. The problem is that such a data base does not exist. While good information is available, it is limited and does not tell us about all of the leaching that comes out of the walls—