

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NIAGARA RIVER—TOXIC CHEMICAL DUMP SITES

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment. As the Minister will recall, last October his American counterpart came to Ottawa to submit a proposal for a plan to clean up the toxic chemical dump sites along the Niagara River. We have asked the Minister to indicate to us his decision. Now that six months have gone by, the people in the Niagara Peninsula would like to know what is the position of the Minister?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Lee Thomas, met with me here in Ottawa on October 17 at which time, among other things, he gave to me, and through me to the Government, an action plan for the cleaning-up of the Niagara River.

It was to be a four-party action plan involving the U.S. Government, the Canadian Government, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of the State of New York. Our respective officials have been working on it non-stop since then, but I must confess to the Hon. Member and to the House that there is much less progress than I had hoped, simply because the Canadian and U.S. Governments do not see eye to eye on the ultimate solution for the disposal sites on the American side of the Niagara River. We think it should be excavation and incineration. The U.S. Government thinks it should be containment.

REQUEST FOR MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Will the Minister tell the House when he will make a public statement to let the people in the Niagara Peninsula and those who draw their water from Lake Ontario know what their future is going to be?

Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I thought I just did. I did state categorically on behalf of the Canadian Government that we think the only solution for the disposal sites on the American side along the Niagara River is excavation and incineration or, at the very least, the removal of those toxic chemicals to somewhere else that would be less vulnerable. In the meantime we are doing our best through our different officials to get agreement from the Americans on their own action plan, which will not do the job which needs to be done until there is increased accommodation by the Americans to our position.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

YOUTH

INQUIRY IF GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN FINANCING RE-ESTABLISHED KATIMAVIK PROGRAM

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State. Would the Government be prepared to participate in the funding of Katimavik if the program were to be maintained through financial support shared by the Government and the private sector, and donations from Canadian individuals, as is the case with Youth Canada-World?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Secretary of State of Canada): On several occasions, Mr. Speaker, I explained the Government's position concerning Katimavik. Whatever the program, the Government of Canada has reviewed its priorities, particularly with respect to job creation. I would fail to understand if the Hon. Member were to raise objections, because day in and day out his Party keeps saying that we must create jobs for young people. That is what we are trying to do, and I would think the Hon. Member will not attempt to convince me that Katimavik is a job-creation program.

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Spaker, is the Government prepared to participate in the re-establishment of Katimavik? Is there any way Katimavik might be maintained with the Government's full or partial support, or is the Government bent on eliminating Katimavik because it is not a Conservative program?

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order. That is simply the same question repeated.

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FERRIES

BORDEN-CAPE TORMENTINE SERVICE

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. It has to do with the Nielsen task force report which stated the Borden-Cape Tormentine ferry service was recognized as being constitutional. However, the report also recommended that the Government of Canada ask the courts to decide whether or not the Government of Canada is obligated to subsidize that service. Will the Minister of Transport tell us today if he will once and for all say, no, we are obligated, and not allow that to go to the courts?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member is fully aware that the proposals contained in the Nielsen task force are options for consideration. The Transport document will be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and at that time individual Members who want to express a point of view on all of the options outlined therein will have an opportunity to do so.