

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER—DUMPING OF PCBs BY GENERAL MOTORS
FOUNDRY AT MASSENA, N. Y.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. The other night Canadians were shown on *The Journal* a major corporation in Massena, New York, namely General Motors, dumping substantial quantities of PCBs into the St. Lawrence River. Has the Government of Canada made strong representations in New York protesting this action? Has it also sought the co-operation of the U.S. Government in cleaning up this situation which is affecting the health of millions of people in that basin?

• (1500)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member will know that my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, has taken not only a very active role but has played, in the achievement of the ozone agreement, a highly successful role in advancing Canada's environmental interests, both in this country and internationally. The important question he raises is one that would fall in the first instance in the jurisdiction of my colleague, and on his behalf I will take note of it.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): The Secretary of State knows that the Minister of the Environment's record is one of inaction on transboundary pollution matters. My question has to do with dumping PCBs in the St. Lawrence River and I would like the Secretary of State to answer the question. Has he himself made strong representations in Washington? Has he protested the action of General Motors? Has he sought the co-operation of the U.S. Government in cleaning up this mess which is affecting the health of millions of people?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as is the well understood custom in this House, I took notice on behalf of my colleague and I will ensure that the question is brought to his direct attention.

I should go on to say, since it has been raised this way, that if we want to make effective representations regarding environmental problems, it is not enough to quote a television program. We also have to conduct investigations to find out, from the point of view of our scientists, what is the exact nature of the damage that is alleged or might be occurring. That is being carried out now by the Department of the Environment on the instruction of the Minister. We will, as we have in the past, take whatever action is appropriate after that evidence has been accumulated.

Mr. Speaker: I want to advise Hon. Members that this will be the last question and I recognize the Hon. Member for Humboldt—Lake Centre.

Oral Questions

AGRICULTURE

REPORTED INTENTION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA TO WITHDRAW
FROM SUPPLY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question concerning our federal-provincial relations with the provinces that I wish to direct to the Minister of Agriculture. I will deal with British Columbia today and its unhappiness with the national approach to marketing agencies which has now arisen to the political level with the Premier's announcement yesterday that the province intends to pull out of the supply management schemes and is prepared to stop cheese and industrial milk products from entering B.C. What is the federal Government proposing to do about that?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, because of our interest in the maintenance of supply management systems in Canada, we feel that any involvement other than another statement at this time from the federal Minister of Agriculture could well be less than helpful. I have expressed disappointment and also indicated that I was not surprised because I am aware of some unrest that has existed in the supply managed commodities sector in British Columbia.

Again I have indicated in conversation with the leadership of the producers of those supply managed commodities in the province that their first choice is to remain within the system. I do not think we want to over-react. We do not want to ignore the problem. I hope it would be possible to find a solution to this problem within the supply management system.

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HORTICULTURE

HONEY-RESIDUE TOLERANCE LEVEL

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt—Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, since another province, Quebec, has effectively disallowed honey shipments from the rest of the country, by establishing its own very stringent sulfathiazole levels, a very effective non-tariff trade barrier which the U.S. subsequently copied, can the Government tell us what progress if any is being made toward the arrival of one national residue tolerance level for honey in Canada?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the Province of Quebec has the provincial authorization and authority to do this, so we have to respond. At that point, of course, we had no tolerance levels. The action by that particular province necessitated that we make a request to Health and Welfare to establish tolerance levels. Those tolerance levels were established by the appropriate federal authority, National Health and Welfare, and we are carrying that out.

We must recognize that if we are to have a market within Canada for Canadian honey, then we have to meet those