

between the two countries and there are enshrined very tough and strict rules governing the movement and transportation of dangerous goods. The Opposition knows perfectly well that those rules provide for such things as a very precise and detailed notification of the export of contingent goods from the states to Canada or from Canada to the states, so that the provinces and the states are duly notified in advance that toxic materials will be transported in their territory. The states can refuse those exports if they have reason to do so. When they refuse an exportation, they have the right to return the goods to the exporting country.

• (1530)

There is also an obligation to set up a manifest which must contain all the details referring to the export. It is possible for the customs and environmental inspectors at the border to verify if the contents of the truck correspond with the details appearing on the manifest.

The House should also know there are laws obliging countries to provide adequate facilities for the treatment of those toxic wastes. No one can import toxic wastes from Canada or the states without the necessary facilities to destroy them or recycle them.

Much has been said about the fact that the American export of toxic wastes to Canada are greater than toxic wastes to the states. There have been many figures cited, but I suggest it is approximately 140,000 tonnes of American waste to Canada compared to 40,000 tonnes of Canadian toxic waste to the states. The Opposition is correct to hope that at some point we will be able to exclude all possibility of American export to Canada of toxic waste. But we have to be careful and practical. Right now Canada needs to export its own toxic waste to America because in some areas we do not have the required facilities to treat our own material. Let us be practical and responsible. It would be a terrible decision to forbid any import of toxic materials when we have the facilities to destroy or treat them, because the immediate result would be for us to be stuck with stockpiles of toxic materials which we cannot treat or destroy. It would be

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very damaging and very irresponsible toward public health and the environment to do so.

This being said, we must establish a serious and strong policy to provide Canada with the required facilities for the treatment and destruction of our toxic wastes so we may be in a position as soon as possible to be strict with the importation of toxic wastes.

Let me point out that the Opposition does not mention the fact that the new law enacted last year, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, gives us all the tools to control the full life cycle of toxic materials. It is impossible for anyone now to introduce into the market new toxic substances without a full assessment by the Government. The Opposition also forgets to remind the people that the Canadian Environmental Protection Act gives us the power to establish a priority list where known toxic substances will be fully investigated and scientifically assessed.

This power has been exercised by the Government. A few months ago I had the honour to sign and publish a list of close to 50 toxic substances that will be analysed in priority. Those are concrete measures and constructive actions by the Government to assure Canadians and Canada that we will get rid of all toxic materials.

We have also announced numerous programs to destroy all federally owned PCBs in Canada, and have provided this program with a \$21 million budget.

In Nova Scotia, for example, we launched a \$34 million clean-up program of the Sydney tar ponds.

The Government has also been able to benefit from a dialogue with the provinces. We do not fight with the provinces. That is one of the main benefits of this open and civilized policy which the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) established four years ago. The provinces are no longer an enemy of the federal Government. They are part of Canada and we can talk with them and work together for the environment in Canada.

One of the main benefits of this is that we now have devised a national PCB phase-out strategy and within five years we will get rid of all PCBs in Canada. As well, a few weeks ago in Montreal we had a meeting with all the Ministers of Environment in Canada, where we agreed to set up a waste action plan to reduce by 50 per cent all municipal waste in Canada by the year 2000. This action is taken without legal fights in the Supreme