

which exist presently on both sides of the border to combat a very urgent and pressing danger.

Mr. Fulton: Madam Speaker, the question of acid rain in Canada is hardly a new one. I think some of the proposals being made by President Carter are worthy of note by this House. President Carter's plan called for 300 new coal-fired plants and 107 oil-burning plants being converted to coal, almost all of which will be in the northeastern United States, thereby affecting Canada.

Now, 48,000 lakes are threatened in Canada, and the United States emissions are proposed to increase dramatically. Perhaps the minister could advise this House and the people of Canada what precise steps the ministry is taking in considering the protection and the revitalization of these vital Canadian resources.

An hon. Member: We can put a fan on the border and blow all the air back.

Mr. Roberts: Madam Speaker, the question prompts a long response. I should like to say, simply, three things very briefly. We have already pressed on the United States our concerns over the implementation of President Carter's proposals if they were to go ahead unchanged. They must go through the congressional process, and I am confident that many changes will take place during that process.

Second, the hon. member should be as much concerned with the existing transgression of regulations, not simply about the future effects of oil conversion to coal but of the existing regulations which are not being fully applied in the United States. We have been making vigorous representations on that point as well.

The third thing of which the hon. member should be aware is that much of this problem is engendered here in Canada. I have undertaken discussions with some of my provincial counterparts. There are aspects of Canadian performance in this area which must be cleaned up. I am confident that within the next two weeks there will be significant movement on this particular part of the question, particularly in reference to the source of pollution which comes from Inco in Sudbury, as a result of joint action by the federal government and the provincial government of Ontario.

Mr. Fulton: Madam Speaker, I think a lot of Canadians are concerned about the sort of whimpering, headless horseman attitude which we have seen in the past and see in the present in terms of this type of pollution. Perhaps the minister would advise us the position he and his cabinet colleagues are taking toward the visit of Cyrus Vance today, whether it is simply going to be a back-patting gesturing—

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Fulton:—or whether the minister is going to make specific representations, through the Secretary of State for External Affairs, to Cyrus Vance to make sure the type of

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pollution emissions which are occurring today will be terminated.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Repeat the question.

Mr. Roberts: Madam Speaker, the hon. member refers to whimpering. I think it is clear from my answers that we have already taken considerably vigorous action. What the hon. gentleman is doing is neighing, after the barn door is closed, about proposals he would like to have made.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

PROSECUTION FOR FALSE ADVERTISING

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, last week the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General dropped charges against 57 Ontario stores accused of selling ground beef laced with pork.

I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he was consulted before this decision was made; and, if so, where does this leave his department in terms of its ability to ensure Canadians that they are getting what is advertised in what they buy?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, if I understand correctly, these charges were withdrawn because of a previous court decision affecting the legislation. It does not in any way mean that the surveillance, etc., will not be maintained by all departments concerned making sure meat and other products in Canada are pure and wholesome.

● (1430)

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General. Now that he has dropped these charges and has abdicated his responsibility to the Canadian consumer—who now has no protection against the sale of questionable ground beef—what guarantees can he offer, to the Jewish community especially, that mixing of ground beef with pork will not continue?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, I would like to reassure the hon. member that indeed officers in my department continue to monitor commercial practices, and if they once more detect ground beef laced with pork they will take the appropriate action and this could mean seizure or criminal lawsuits. The hon. member has referred to dropped charges, which were based on contents and standards and had absolutely no implication of fraud, or selling or labelling in a deceitful way. So the distinction must be clear and I want to reassure not only the hon. member but all members of this