

*Oral Questions*

● (1440)

**ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS****GREAT LAKES POLLUTION—RECOMMENDED PUBLIC CONSUMER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment and is with regard to the report of the International Joint Commission on the Great Lakes. For 30 years or more the pollution of Lake Ontario has threatened people living on both sides of that body, the use of beaches and, at times, the safe use of drinking water. The IJC report indicates that consumers may be part of the solution rather than part of the problem by becoming more conscious of what toxic chemicals are doing to our water.

What action is the Minister prepared to take to respond to the IJC's recommendation that a public consumer education program be undertaken to induce more and more of the public to use less and less toxic chemicals?

**Hon. Tom McMillan (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, the question relates to one of 36 recommendations brought down by the International Joint Commission a few days ago. I am exploring with all of my relevant cabinet colleagues how we might respond to all of the recommendations as a package rather than to any individual ones separately.

In connection with education I can certainly tell the Hon. Member that I am very sympathetic to the position he expressed in his question. We have ourselves greatly highlighted that part of our total program over the past year through, for example, increased funding for Environment Week. With my cabinet colleagues, including the Secretary of State for External Affairs, I will be exploring how we can follow up even further.

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**REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION****HAWKER SIDDELEY PLANT AT TRENTON, N.S.**

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and it, too, is with regard to the Trenton car works in Nova Scotia. The 2,000 laid-off employees of that particular company as well as the entire community of Trenton are very uncertain as to their future and anxious to have the federal Government exert some leadership at this most difficult time.

Will the Minister confirm that his Department knew of this pending sale or closure some weeks ago? Would he indicate to the House what discussions took place with the Premier of the Province of Nova Scotia? Would he also tell the House what actions he and his government colleagues intend to take in the

coming weeks to assist the workers and the community of Trenton?

[Translation]

**Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion):** First, Mr. Speaker, I must correct the Hon. Member's statement. Until now there has been no reference to any shutdown, but to a selling out. The company intends to sell its interests in Trenton, not to stop its operations. Second, on this Government's commitment, again we must meet regional challenges as I said. We have provided constant help and shown our interest in the Atlantic region's workers especially. We will still be doing this, while recognizing the area's problems and working with the company and the Province involved.

[English]

**REQUEST FOR PROGRAM TO ASSIST COMMUNITY**

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, I will direct my supplementary question to the same Minister. I hope that this commitment is not similar to the commitment the Government made to the workers in Moncton, New Brunswick. I would like to remind the Minister that it was the Prime Minister who led the people of Pictou County to believe that as a result of his by-election victory in 1983 incidents of this nature would not happen.

Will the Minister undertake to visit Trenton, Nova Scotia, meet with the affected workers, and implement a program of action to assist those 2,000 employees and the community of Trenton, thereby living up to the commitment, the promises and the undertakings that the Prime Minister made to those people?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to that question. First, the allusion to the Moncton situation is quite inaccurate. The Moncton situation went off the rails largely because unions refused to accept the compromise put forward by the federal Government, the Government of New Brunswick, and the people of Moncton. I think it is important to note that that, in large measure, is why the situation developed as it did in Moncton.

With regard to Trenton, there was no reference in any campaign at any time to incidents of this nature not happening. There was certainly an undertaking at that time by the Member of Parliament and the Government to do everything that we possibly could to be of assistance and keep alive a very vital and historic part of industrial Nova Scotia in the constituency of Cape Breton.

We have acted already. For example, right in my hon. friend's home area, in Sydney, we have been of tremendous assistance, along with the Government of Nova Scotia, to Sysco and the development of Cape Breton. We will do no less to help the people of Central Nova who depend very much on this traditional industry as a source of growth for their region.