

GOVERNMENT RECORD

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, maybe the Prime Minister will actually answer the question. He made the commitment to a new environmental vision being needed for Canada, with which most Canadians would agree. His Government has cut more than 400 people from the Department since he was elected. It has cut back on research on PCBs and ignored the recommendation of the Law Reform Commission to put environmental matters into the Criminal Code. It ignored another commission which the Minister has just acknowledged today.

Considering all of that, why should the people of Canada believe the Government is serious and is not just indulging in pre-election posturing?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as the Leader of the NDP used some rhetoric to justify the conclusion at which he arrived, perhaps he would also be interested in some matters of which he has personal knowledge as a Member of this House.

In less than four years the Government and the House have created the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, the strongest piece of environmental protection legislation passed by the federal Parliament. The International Protocol on Ozone, the Montreal Protocol, was ratified. We have advanced by two years the regulations for phasing out lead in gasoline.

We updated the National Parks Act for the first time in a decade. We have created parks on Ellesmere Island, the Bruce Peninsula, the Pacific Rim, and South Moresby. We are going to create a marine park on the Saguenay River. We have moved to begin implementing the Canada-U.S. Agreement on the North American Water-Fowl Management Plan. We have taken action with the provincial Governments, to which the Leader of the Opposition is apparently opposed, to clean up areas such as the St. Lawrence River and Halifax Harbour.

The Leader of the New Democratic Party asks why we plan to do more on the environment. Because we already have a record of very substantial accomplishment to protect the environment in Canada.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, there is not a serious environmental group in the country who will believe what the Prime Minister says.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

DESTRUCTION OF PCBs—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Prime Minister or the Minister a question.

The provincial and federal Ministers discussed the problem of PCBs last week, but they did not decide on a date for the elimination of PCBs in Canada. At the same time, although

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they mentioned costs of \$500 million to solve this problem, the federal Government did not offer any money.

The question is very simple: Why not set a date for the destruction of all PCBs in Canada and why not offer federal money to solve this problem?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister answered this question quite specifically yesterday, and today we have provided some answers to serious environmental protection questions.

But right at the beginning, the Leader of the New Democratic Party told us, perhaps in jest, but he said in passing:

[*English*]

—that there is not an environmental group that would take the Government seriously on that. I point out to my hon. friend that the Minister of the Environment was honoured by the Sierra Club as the most outstanding public official on the protection of the environment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Copps: Did they pay him \$10,000?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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● (1440)

TRANSPORT

CLOSURE OF TRUCKING COMPANY—APPLICATION OF CANADA LABOUR CODE

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. Yesterday the Minister stated that he is having his officials look into the closure of Transportation Route Canada to assure that there are no abuses of the Canada Labour Code. Yet on December 16, last year, I wrote to the Minister and stated that I believed he was in violation of the Canada Labour Code with respect to lay-offs by Route Canada the month before, last November, and that the workers across Canada, including those my constituency, were unemployed because of the arbitrary acts of the Government and Canadian National. The Minister did nothing then. How can we believe now that he will do something to help these laid-off workers?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, obviously I will look at that letter again because I do not have it with me today. I will be able, I am sure, to let my hon. colleague know that my officials most probably looked it up and there were probably no difficulties at that time.

Ms. Copps: Right. Several thousand people out of work.

Mr. Cadieux: With respect to the situation today, if the Hon. Member for Hamilton East is at all interested in this