

January 1982

Questions and Answers

Q & A

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Recommended Citation

Q & A, *Questions and Answers*, 5 Can.-U.S. L.J. 39 (1982)

Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/cuslj/vol5/iss/10>

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Questions and Answers

DR. LA BASTILLE: We will open for questions now. Would you state your name and to whom your question is addressed.

JEFF FRISCHKORN: Dr. Clapham, aren't you trying to fix finite conclusions from comparatively recent and insufficient data?

DR. CLAPHAM: What I am saying is that we must use the best data we have to make a decision that is going to be made very shortly. I don't like the data. I doubt if Dr. Martin or Dr. Cowling likes the data. We would like more, but we don't have more.

What I am suggesting is that the data we have is good enough to justify a responsible policy decision at this time. To say anything else would be saying that the decision will be made on the basis of no data. I think that is clearly worse. Or, that we are somehow going to think that we can fool people by saying that delay is not making a decision, which I think is a totally irresponsible attitude.

BOB FAY, Cleveland: Dr. Martin, do I hear you saying that you are asking industry and consumers to pay 30 to 50 percent more power to reduce acid rain?

DR. MARTIN: I don't recall saying that.

MR. FAY: Pick a number out of the sky as to what it is going to cost to reduce SO₂ emissions, is that what I am hearing from you?

DR. MARTIN: I am saying that the delivery of these materials is causing damage that we are scientifically assessing. The economists can determine what the value of those damages is and how much it will cost you in power bills to clean it up at the source.

From what I have heard, I would also suggest that that cost, when it is distributed over a power grid to the consumer, is far less than your 50 percent suggestion.

DR. LA BASTILLE: If I might add something, I have several concrete figures in the very recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] report and a figure that to clean up the emissions, I believe at a 50 percent reduction, would cost the average citizen across the board \$5 to \$12. That's hardly 50 percent. I would be willing to pay \$25.

When you level it across the whole country it is not very much to do the kind of cleanup we need. Also, to add another figure on corrosion, the same report stated that Americans are now paying \$7.16 for only corrosion damage from acid precipitation, whereas Canadians pay about \$10 and Europeans about \$4.50.

When you start balancing them out we are already paying for the darn thing. Better to pay to clean it up and not have the other damages.

DAVE KEY: Dr. Cowling, a number of your slides, one of Chicago

and the one of the Parkway, I would consider as being unrelated. Our country, the United States, is going through a program to reduce hydrocarbon emissions to deal with that problem.

Could you briefly describe what the relationship is between what we are doing on control and how that might impact the long range acid problem?

DR. COWLING: I think all of these things need to be considered. Dr. Martin could speak more authoritatively to the relative contributions of various relative compounds in the air, but the same chemical phenomenon that is going on in the atmosphere that leads to loss of visibility also affects the chemistry of the deposition.

I honestly believe that our understanding of the total thrust of man's enjoyment of these ecological forces is important for us to bear in mind. We cannot isolate sulfate or the flouride problem.

DR. LA BASTILLE: The last question and then I am going to cut it off.

BUDDY BEACH: I would like to ask Dr. LaBastille how would you broach the problem of spreading these costs among the citizens of the entire country?

DR. LA BASTILLE: I am hardly an economist and I can only give you a gut feeling. We can put it on our utility bills over a length of time or put it on our new costs or whatever it is that we use that burns some kind of fossil fuel to pay for any damage over time.

Thank you very much.