

The Address—Mr. McMillan

agriculture, forestry and structures which are negatively impacted upon by the emissions from the combustion of leaded gasoline?

Mr. McMillan: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia), who is the critic on the environment for the Official Opposition, has essentially raised three points. The first has to do with a report commissioned by the Deputy Ministerial Task Force on Program Review. That was one report among two or three done on the Department of the Environment, not to mention many other reports on other Departments but having an impact on the Department of the Environment. Twenty major studies were performed by the task force within the entire federal Government. When the former Deputy Prime Minister tabled most of those reports in the House of Commons, he noted that, together, they weighed approximately 35 pounds and covered every nook and cranny of the federal Government.

I say that to remind the Hon. Member for Davenport that those are only reports. The one on the environment to which he has taken greatest offence is one of several on the environment. There are conflicts in many of them. They are not government policy and are not even necessarily options that the Government is considering. They are recommendations by private sector individuals and public employees concerning options which they hope the Government will consider.

Having said that, the Government's answer to the report to which he has made particular reference is in the Throne Speech. There were references in the Throne Speech to the Environmental Protection Act, to major amendments to the National Parks Act and to a commitment to come forth soon with a water policy for the federal Government and for the country as a whole. Those initiatives, individually and collectively, should put a lie to the speculation and rumours of the doomsters and naysayers against this Department.

Second, the Hon. Member asked about amendments to the National Parks Act. Contrary to what he said, these were not ready in the spring of 1984 and were not ready even in the spring of 1985. They went to the Department of Justice for drafting this past summer. The drafting is now completed, the printing is in process and the translation is well underway. I hope to be able to introduce the amendments in Parliament for first reading within weeks.

On the issue of leaded and unleaded gasoline, I am working hand in glove with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Masse) who is in the House today. He is proving to be not only a great Minister of Energy, but also a great environmental Minister of Energy. I am also working with my colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp), and other Ministers on that issue.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will recognize the Hon. Member for Essex—Windsor (Mr. Langdon) and then the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) for very short questions or comments in order that the Minister can reply.

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, in view of your admonition I will cut to the minimum the comments which I wanted to make.

There is a tremendous sense of urgency across the country, and it is particularly strong in my part of the country, with regard to issues like the Detroit incinerator, the flooding which is taking place in Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie, the continued inability to identify the source of the infamous St. Clair blob of last year, the tremendous dioxin ingestion which seems to be taking place in the Great Lakes Basin and, of course, acid rain.

I do not question the Minister with a sense of strong criticism or denigration of his efforts because I think he has been a breath of fresh air after the previous Minister. However, is the Minister not prepared to stand up and admit that he is not satisfied with the attempts to reclaim our environment for people? If he is honest he will say that he is not satisfied. Therefore, how does he envision that we can push ahead with much more urgency to achieve some of the goals that are so crucial to all the people of the country?

Mr. McMillan: Mr. Speaker, I will answer very briefly because I think I have only about 60 seconds. Of course, I am not satisfied. I am not satisfied with the record of all governments or the record of Canada and Canadians. We have to do more and we will do more. We are going to bring in an Environmental Protection Act which will be the most progressive in the western hemisphere. It is going to be backed up with a compliance and enforcement schedule to demonstrate to Canadians that the Government means business when it takes on polluters in all their forms.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I will not see the clock. I will recognize the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson).

Mr. Nickerson: Mr. Speaker, my question is supplementary to some of those asked during Question Period dealing with brucellosis.

Canada has been declared a brucellosis-free country, yet the Minister of the Environment knows that brucellosis, as well tuberculosis, is endemic in his herd of buffalo in Wood Buffalo National Park. It would be a danger for domestic cattle if that disease spreads. Could the Minister outline his plans to deal with this persistent and very important problem?

Mr. McMillan: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson) is right. This is a severe and very persistent problem. My Department has instructed its top scientists to remain on top of the issue and recommend a course of action. We think that before very long we will be able to announce it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the Chair until two o'clock.

At 1.01 p.m., the House took recess.