

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that I have managed—I hope—to explain that the national plan which the Hon. Member calls for in her motion is not at all necessary and will not be the solution required in the Canadian context.

Our Government has an active role to play in managing hazardous and toxic waste and it is not neglecting its responsibilities. In the years to come, we will continue our efforts to adopt policies, set up programs and pass the legislation and regulations required for us to have an effective waste management system which will be safe both for Canadians and for the environment. The provinces also have their role to play. In Canada, we have a confederation and it is not up to the federal Government to act unilaterally and hastily to impose on the country plans and projects that will not eliminate the problem of hazardous and toxic waste in Canada.

• (1700)

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the Hon. Member and I would like to ask him a question because I think that he didn't mention the municipal infrastructure and the need to improve it in order to protect the environment.

For example, in my riding as well as in many others, municipalities sometimes spill polluted waters in our rivers, in the St. Lawrence River, and so on.

Would the hon. Member opposite agree with me that the plan proposed by the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) during the last election campaign which called for a joint action by the federal, provincial and municipal governments was an excellent initiative for the environment? And I will give the following example to try to make my hon. friend understand why that is important.

In my riding, near Lancaster in Ontario, or Saint-Anicet if you are on the Quebec side, there is Lake Saint-François which is a broadening of the St. Lawrence River. Lake Saint-François in that region has serious erosion and pollution problems, which could be alleviated by the infrastructure improvement program. Every year serious erosion problems eat away at the shores of Lake Saint-François and increase the lake area.

That problem has caused considerable damage to lakeside property. There is no local solution. A small municipality can certainly not spend thousands of dollars to protect lakeside property. Property owners don't have a solution either. After all, it is the St. Lawrence Seaway

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passing through the middle of the lake which is mainly responsible for erosion damage.

Would my colleague agree with me that the plan proposed by the Right Hcn. Leader of the Opposition could be used to restore the shores of Lake Saint-François, like I just said, or to improve municipal sewer service, and that the Government should adopt that excellent initiative? Even if the Government were slightly guilty of stealing the Opposition's ideas, we would be willing to give up our copyright, Mr. Speaker, because it would be a good initiative.

What does my colleague opposite think of that idea?

Mr. Tremblay (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, as I was just saying at the end of my speech, Canada is a federal state. Just as federal-provincial relations are important, as I think my colleague opposite will realize, federal-municipal relations are even more important, and we have had examples of this.

Mr. Speaker, it makes me think of trying to define virtue. As I said in my speech, everyone is in favour of the environment and environmental protection. But how to do it is another matter!

The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bouchard) in his eloquent talk just told us of the challenge facing us and the complexity of the situation.

When the Leader of the Opposition during the election campaign suggested a plan, he forgot something important—the municipalities' consent. He forgot to consult the municipalities, just as when he was in power himself, he forgot to consult the provinces.

Mr. Speaker, that is one reason why in Québec we have Bill 38 which, as a consequence of the doings of the Liberal Party when they were in power, forbids direct or indirect (federal) intervention in municipal jurisdiction. It is all very well to propose virtue, but you still have to be credible!

What we are proposing in fact— I just mentioned many examples of cooperation, not only with the provinces but also with the municipalities, because since 1984, we have credibility in our relations with the provinces and municipalities. That is why our overall project has the best credibility. There is no question of plagiarizing. There is no magic formula. No extraordinary invention is needed. What is needed is steady work by effective, competent people and by a serious-minded government.