

*Government Orders*

The constituency of Surrey North is a mixture of urban and rural with the urban increasing at the expense of the rural. That alteration along with the population growth and business expansion has caused concerns and greater awareness of the environmental impacts. That desire is truly tested by an explosive population growth.

One characteristic of the people of Surrey North and indeed the people of the west coast is the desire to preserve the natural climate and the environment as best they can. Numerous environmentally oriented projects are apparent in the daily activities of west coast citizens. A heightened awareness of the importance of environmental concerns is demonstrated through more and more presentations and/or questions being asked by citizens on such things as air and water pollution, the long range effects of cutting our trees, right down to their participation in recycling programs.

Second, another environmental concern is that the wild animals are losing their homelands due to the human population explosion and the effects of meeting our own needs for survival. Only our parks are destined, probably within the next century, to become homes for our wild animals unless we change our ways.

The British Isles would be a prime example of this. A couple of centuries ago large animals such as moose and bear roamed on that land through great stands of trees. Somewhere along the line lumber gave way to bricks for building the human dwellings and the moose, the bear, the large cats and other animals that were there gradually became thought of as being indigenous to North America.

Another example of the abuse of our environment seemingly for our need for survival is in the early days of our explorers, Jacques Cartier's time for example. During that time it was recorded that the fish were so plentiful off our east coast that his crew had a tough time getting the oars in the water to move their dinghy forward.

Today we are all aware of the present situation on the east coast where the stocks have been so depleted that the economic foundation and livelihood of a region has been seriously changed, perhaps forever. Not only is there an economic impact, the fish themselves are possibly close to being an endangered species.

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Another example would be Easter Island where thriving civilizations cut trees to build homes and move great stone statues. Soon there were no trees left. The homes are no longer, the statues are stationary, and the once thriving civilization is all but gone.

Balancing the wants of people with the capabilities of the environment is a challenge which all communities must face. It is a challenge which people from Surrey have met so far. The industrial expansion of the past few years has not as far as we know had a negative impact on our environment. Surrey is a

community that disproves the notion that industry necessarily hurts environment.

We must realize as a nation that we can have a thriving economy and a healthy environment at the same time. That is the sensible approach of the Reform Party. Our blue book states support for the concept of "sustainable development" because "without economic development and the income generated therefrom the environment will not be protected or enjoyed".

What Reformers recognize is garnered from what most Canadians recognize: the importance of the environment to our livelihood as a nation; the importance of the natural resources it provides for our economy and well-being; the variables of the vast geography and sometimes harsh climate that we must encounter; and the preservation of the pure beauty of the natural environment which never ceases to amaze us and visitors to our great nation. This we must preserve.

At the end of the last sitting I drove from Ottawa to Surrey. I was taken aback and awestruck by the absolute beauty and astounding diversity of our country, from the hills, trees, and unique rock formations of northern Ontario to the wide open prairies of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, through the majestic Rockies and down to the scenic beauty of the west coast. If you are able to ignore the areas of clear cut and look past the smoke billowing from some factory or mill, the drive across our country is an experience all Canadians should share. Only after a drive like that does one realize the magnitude, greatness and potential of our country.

We must always strive to maintain that close link between people and their natural environment in this country and continually improve our understanding of the earth itself and our effects upon it. We are as individuals much more aware today of our environment and the effects our actions can have upon it. We are also very aware that the various levels of government are actively involved in the decision making process for many of these very actions involving our environment.

Bill C-56 including the three amendments is a small step forward at the federal level to enhance the process of achieving these decisions. It would be helpful first to take a look at the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act itself.

The act requires the federal government to study the environmental impacts of a whole range of projects that until now have escaped public scrutiny. Environmental assessments have been done in the past and have not carried the weight they should in the making of the final decision. Economic considerations have had the tendency to rank higher in importance in the decision making process.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act creates the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. This agency replaces the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office. This office was criticized for being costly because of overlap and duplication and for being inconsistently applied. Replacing one office with another may not in itself improve the situation