

Supply

Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the NDP had been specific about the Government's failings with respect to fairness and equality and the environment, I think we would have been able to provide a serious and sensible response to the points raised in such a motion. Especially, Mr. Speaker, when we are talking about the environment. In fact, I don't think the environment should be treated as a partisan issue in this House. I think the environment is something Canadians want to hear more about and they also want some action, whether we are talking about, the atmosphere, our water, our soil, our personal well-being and our quality of life. It should not be a partisan issue in this House, since all three, in fact all four parties represent a population that is concerned about the environment. Unfortunately, we see once again that the Opposition Parties are making this a partisan issue.

The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bouchard), the Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean, made a speech this morning which I think—

Mrs. Duplessis: An excellent speech!

Mr. Vincent: An excellent speech, said the Hon. Member for Louis-Hébert (Mrs. Duplessis). He made a speech which, I think, touched on most of the points that should have been raised by the Leader of the NDP on Opposition day in a logical and normal motion.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a short rundown of what this Government has done for the environment during the past four years. We had the Canadian Environmental Protection Act—a first—which is straight to the point about the environment in this country. Last year, we had the Ozone Protocol. We said that as of December 1, 1990, there would be no more leaded gas in Canada. We had legislation to protect wild life, another first. We are working on a document in connection with the International Convention on the Atmosphere.

There was the Canada Water Preservation Act. As you know, the Prime Minister of Canada is working very hard on the acid rain issue, and is putting pressure on the United States to have this settled within a reasonable timeframe.

Going back in time to 1984, Mr. Speaker, you may recall that the former Liberal Government's file on acid rain was not much thicker than the two covers put together. But since 1984 the Prime Minister of Canada and the various Environment Ministers—including in-

cumbent Minister Lucien Bouchard—have worked on this issue with the United States.

We also know that so far seven of the ten provinces have signed an acid rain agreement with this Progressive Conservative Government, a monetary agreement and an agreement concerning the environment.

In June 1988, less than a year ago, it was announced that \$110 million would be earmarked for cleaning up the St. Lawrence River. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I was in my riding office in Trois-Rivières on that day, and I can still remember getting phone calls from constituents who congratulated the Government and the Prime Minister of Canada for doing something to clean up the St. Lawrence, not only in words but by providing the funds needed to restore the river to the condition it was in years and years ago.

In 1989, Mr. Speaker, \$90 million will be spent to promote local cleaning-up operations.

Ninety million is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker, and again we owe this to the Minister and his department.

In the House this morning Opposition Members complained about the lack of funds in the Department of the Environment. Unfortunately—because the environment should not be a partisan issue—Members on the other side of the House chose not to mention the fact that the budget of Environment Canada has been increased by 9.4 per cent this year. That, Mr. Speaker, is the biggest departmental increase in 17 years, not one, two or three years, but 17 years, the biggest increase, 9.4 per cent, but they forgot to mention that.

Both Opposition parties also neglected to point out, where they would take the extra money they want to spend on the Department of Environment and all other departments.

Mr. Speaker, all we hear from the Opposition is we should put more money into the environment, child care, this and that, and I could go on and on.

This is too easy, Mr. Speaker! We all know that as Members it is much more rewarding and gratifying to give than to cut funding. But the major question in 1989 is this: Where is the money going to come from, the millions and billions of dollars the Opposition is calling for in every area, when we have a \$320 billion national debt that is increasing by \$3 million an hour, some \$80 million a day?