

Oral Questions

My question is for the Prime Minister. Today, after much huffing and puffing, we have finally received the green plan.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martin: Its basic message is that of the Cheshire cat. How dare they clap as the environment of this nation goes down the drain.

Only a Tory party would clap over a plan that has the rest of the country crying. The basic message of this plan is straight out of the Cheshire cat in *Alice in Wonderland*. It says, and I can almost quote from the plan: "If you do not know where you want to go, then any road will get you there."

This plan has no vision. It has no coherence, and it has no legislation. This is not an action plan. Everything in the plan is subject to 18 months of consultation. Nothing is firm, and it is all subject to approval.

Some hon. members: Right on.

Mr. Martin: All the Tories are doing, Mr. Speaker, is asking Canadians—

Some hon. members: Question.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, they are asking us to trust them. They told Canadians to trust them with day care. You failed us before. Why should we trust you now?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, this morning we tabled the green plan for Canada. It is a comprehensive plan. It is a plan that was done in full consultation with Canadians. We had over 11,000 Canadians involved in the consultation process. It is a five-year action plan. It is a revolving plan. After year one, we will add year six.

It is a plan that addresses the concerns that we heard from all those Canadians who took the time and effort to participate in the consultations. It is a \$3 billion plan: \$3 billion of fresh, new federal money. That plan has been approved by cabinet and will be implemented.

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, "\$3 billion", said the Minister of the Environment. New money invested in the Green Plan—and I quote—"—represents 1/2 of 1 per cent of government spending over the next five years". Furthermore, all

funding promised in the Green Plan is subject to cabinet approval, which means further discussions. There is no guarantee that the Green Plan will not vanish in to the fog, like the commitment to a national daycare program.

Next year, the government will invest more new money to implement the GST than to protect the environment. That is where its priorities lie. And now for my question: How can the Prime Minister justify spending more money next year to clean out our pockets than to clean up the environment?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to clean up is a situation that was neglected by the previous Liberal governments for 60 to 75 years.

I think Canadians will understand that when a government makes a formal commitment to cabinet to invest \$3 billion—that is, three thousand million dollars—in a plan that is clearly defined with specific objectives, that government is taking the kind of action those people in the opposition have never seen before.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, I have the plan in front of me. For a year now every time this minister or his predecessor has lost a battle in cabinet, every time they have had to eat crow, they have come before the cameras to mouth words which are not their own. Then they would lamely tell us to wait for the green plan.

Today we have the green plan, and it is the environment that has lost. Once again the minister is mouthing the words but the voices are not his own. They are the voices of the minister of energy, they are the voices of the minister of finance, they are the voices—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Martin: Given the fact that the minister is unable to voice his own opinion but has to voice that of other departments, will he tell us in a Tory government what is the difference between a Tory Minister of the Environment and Milli Vanilli?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, first of all, when the member opposite was standing on his feet, he was waving what he claimed to be a copy of the green plan. It is a summary. I would be happy to send the hon. member a full copy so he knows exactly what we have in the green plan.