

Forestry

Not only is the dollar cost of acid-rain damage to buildings and other structures very high, but treasured artifacts, including sculpture and historic sites, are threatened with destruction.

When I gave my speech in response to the Budget on May 18, I stated that Canada needs to develop a foreign policy and not just a defence policy for cruise missile tests and nuclear submarines, but that a foreign policy should be all encompassing with global environmental security as a cornerstone. We need to push for acceleration of the ozone protocol, adoption of an international law of the air, measures to ensure rapid reduction in the CO₂ level, and preservation of tropical rain forests.

Taken together, these measures represent a comprehensive and coherent approach to our environment covering preventive, punitive, and remedial action as well as domestic and international aspects. They demonstrate the proactive liberal approach to this crucial issue and are based on the fundamental premise that pollution is everyone's problem; that we must all work together to ensure a healthy and secure environment for future generations. Sustainable development for the forest industry needs to be defined and must be complemented by comprehensive and extensive national environmental objectives.

My constituents of Western Arctic are concerned that Alberta's massive forestry development has potential to threaten one of Canada's largest and cleanest river systems and massive tracts of northern forests. Seven pulp mills are planned for the Peace-Athabasca River system, the source of most water in the southwestern N.W.T. and northern Alberta. The concept of sustainable development must be applied to this proposal. The economic benefits need to be recognized, but the negative impacts of the project must be minimized. The Government must be held accountable to implement a strict sustainable development regime in good faith.

On May 11, the Member from Davenport asked the Government House Leader when he would introduce a motion to strike the standing committee on acid rain which was in existence until the call of the election. We have heard nothing from the Government.

As usual, this Government will not move fast enough. Regulations are a necessary part of environmental man-

agement. As trustees of the environment, governments must act with vigour to protect it. Governments must lead with comprehensive support and promotion of sustainable economic development.

This Government has to change the way it approaches the environment and the economy. It has to integrate environmental input into decision-making at the highest level. Environment must be a priority of every federal Department.

My Party recommends an auditor general for the environment. Environmental considerations cannot be an add-on or an afterthought. They must be made integral to economic policy-making and planning and a required element of any economic development proposal.

I want to re-emphasize, in conclusion, that acid rain is a problem that wafts across borders. Acid rain, snow, and fog kill fish and other aquatic biota and damage forests in Canada, the U.S., and western and central Europe. An estimated 200,000 square miles of forests in industrial countries are damaged by acid rain or other forms of air pollution. It demands international solutions. As well, discussion of long-range transport of air pollutants can no longer be restricted to oxides of sulphur and nitrogen. Hydrocarbons are interacting with these gases at low atmospheric levels, producing damaging ozone. Toxic pollutants such as pesticides, metals and PCBs are being emitted and volatilizing from aerial sprayings and open bodies of water to be deposited at great distances away. The ecological damage of acid rain is generally understood, but the associated human morbidity and potential long-term health effects are not.

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Pollutants in the environment can wreak unforeseen results, among them a global warming trend that could push average temperatures higher than any in the experience of the human race. A nuclear winter caused by global war might mean the end of most life forms. Yet along with potential self-destruction, the present moment of technology's course has delivered tools of knowledge never before in hand. What is the Government waiting for? We have the tools to do something.