

*Government Orders*

that parliamentarians and Canadians all have an opportunity to respond to power when there is abuse. I just wanted to clarify that matter.

The member also indicated the accounting that occurs in the country. He talked about green accounting. I wonder if the member could tell me if he supports the principle of green accounting when we look at the way our country is developing. It is not an efficient economy based on GNP, growth and development. An efficient economy is one that is based on preservation and conservation as much as growth and development. Is that important to the member?

• (1840)

**Mr. Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member that I appreciate the question. I believe we are on a pathway and that this bill will move us along that pathway more quickly in changing our whole system of calculation.

Some members have talked about—I know we have talked in our own policy group in my riding—about this new notion of a human development index rather than a GNP. The GNP system is not really sensitive to sustainable development. At least to this point it has not been.

I personally love the idea of exploring a whole new way of calculating the balance sheet, not only of our nation but of the planet. The GNP system of old falls off and we convert to a new human development index where the environment and sustainable development are the core factor and the driving factor in the equation.

I believe this cabinet and government is one of the first groups I have seen in a long time around here that has the courage to venture into those waters. The reason I say that is I see the reform we are going through in our social security system. I see the reform in so many other areas.

We are in a period of real reform on so many different issues. I am optimistic that in the not too distant future the whole notion of a human development index will be the new way we measure our whole economic system.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to speak to the issue of the environment.

As we have heard today all of us are concerned about the environment. We are concerned about the air; we are concerned about the water; we are concerned about the soil around us.

Often we look at the environment and we see the radical end of things on the scale. Then we see the radical things on the industrial scale. As all of us recognize it is really the middle ground, the ground of compromise, co-operation and in many cases the ground of trade-offs. We have to understand these trade-offs.

Often someone says: "You're getting kind of hard on environmentalists". I answer: "Yes, but I don't want to live in a cave

and go out and grow my own food. If I don't want to do that, then I have to make trade-offs in order to live the way I want to".

I have a long background in the area of environment. Professionally that was my training. I was involved 25 years ago in the Conservator Society. I went around the country talking about what we could do to conserve our society, recycling and so on. I must admit it was kind of an off topic back then. We were not very popular when we talked about it. A lot of people did not know what we were talking about.

I came from that age of *Silent Spring*, of the environmental impact studies. I worked for the Canadian Wildlife Service. From all that background I gained a real appreciation of preservation of the environment.

As well I have learned that the environment is not in the domain only of socialists and liberals but is of concern to everyone. I want to assure the member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake that when we form the next government we will be concerned about the environment and will place it high on our list of priorities.

I want to also address the member on the reforms that are going on. We are part of that overall reform.

I want as well to quote from our blue book on the environment: "We want to establish clear federal-provincial jurisdiction over environmental matters. We want to reduce duplication, confusion and all of the unnecessary things that so often go with government. We believe the government should provide federal leadership, encourage partnership, encourage private industry to get involved, encourage educational institutions and of course encourage the public to be part of these environmental protection studies".

• (1845)

The environment is related to all of us and interrelated. There are many things wrong and those have been identified here today.

We must of course be equal to everyone and we must go for equal enforcement. In looking at Bill C-56 I think we go at least some way to accomplishing what we want to. Certainly the one assessment will save time and money and will avoid some of the duplication of so many examples we could talk about.

Participatory funding. Having been involved in that grass-roots level of trying to participate in environmental involvement, I can certainly appreciate having that as part of this bill. I think if that is properly administered and decisions are made properly that that can be a great plus for people wanting to get involved in projects and understanding them better.

The decision that the cabinet, not just one minister, will make the decisions regarding this of course becomes even more credible today. A lot of us are reading the recent book published about the last government and that would convince us even more that we want more than one minister deciding anything.