

*Supply*

It also agreed in principle to put \$22 million from the proceeds of the sale of its Langstaff farm property into an atmospheric fund for initiatives such as reforestation in Ontario and outside Canada. My question to the hon. member is, do his bioregions, by any chance, include areas in southern Ontario which would be appropriate for this reforestation project proposed by Toronto City Council?

**Mr. Fulton:** Madam Speaker, I have followed with great interest what has been going on in the city of Toronto through its city council. I think their ideas of reduction of pollutants, which requires some co-operation with the federal government in terms of, for example, emission regulations on motor vehicles. They have gone far beyond that in terms of parking and additional licensing fees and so on, some ideas which have been adopted out of cities that suffer really serious atmospheric problems, such as the city of Los Angeles or Mexico City.

The idea that I particularly like in their proposal in terms of the recycling of carbon emissions is that of making use of the sale of, I believe, a piece of property and taking that \$20 million plus and using it for the replanting of trees, not only within the city of Toronto and its environs, but also in other areas of the world.

We in this House all know that there are areas in Central America and other tropical areas where there are sites where much more significant growth rates are possible, and in terms of carbon fixing, that is one of the reasons why tropical forests are so important. Their capacity to rapidly recycle and to fix carbon dioxide through the carbon cycle is much greater than in our northern forests and even some of our temperate forests which only have a few months of the year to grow.

• (1240)

Let me just touch one more moment on the replanting part of that cycle which I think is very important. The Government of Australia announced earlier this week a plan to plant a billion trees between now and the year 2000. This is really a remarkably important proposal because of the significant areas of Australia that have been deforested and the capacity of that number of trees to fix carbon.

There are 39 bioregions in the country in the area known as the Canadian Shield which is perhaps an area that Toronto city council could look at. There are 11 of

Canada's 39 bioregions and I think the Canadian Forest Service might be best to advise us which would be best. They are the Tundra Hills, the Central Tundra Region, the Northwestern Boreal Uplands, the Central Boreal Uplands, the West Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Precambrian Region, the Central Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Precambrian Region and the East Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Precambrian Region, the Laurentian Boreal Highlands, the East Coast Boreal Region, the Boreal Lake Plateau, the Whale River Region, the Northern Labrador Mountains, the Ungava Tundra Plateau, and the Northern Davis Region as well as the St. Lawrence Lowlands. I think that gives the members some idea of the vast geography, the vast size of these 39 Canadian bioregions and, of course, there are indigenous species of conifers and hardwoods that might be best planted in each of those locales.

Certainly the kind of leadership being shown by the city of Toronto is something that perhaps should be ruminated on somewhat more in this chamber. I find it quite disturbing to have heard the arguments of the Minister of the Environment as to why he is suggesting the completion of the national park system and the setting aside of the designation of 12 per cent of Canada's lands for full protection is somehow a challenge or a non-confidence kind of a motion to the government. I stand to be corrected by the Table and by the Speaker, but it is very important that we know before the end of today that my understanding of votable opposition days is that they are not to be considered as non-confidence motions in the government, that members are free to vote of their own conscience and so they should.

Perhaps, Madam Speaker, you could remark on this point sometime during the day because I think Canadians would like to know whether or not that is the case. I know there are many Conservative members, some of whom are here in the House who have already spoken to me and told me that they would like to support this motion.

**Mr. Fisher:** Madam Speaker, I would like to commend the member for Skeena for leading off the debate today and doing it in one of the grandest styles that could possibly be attributed to a friend of the environment.

I would like to commend him also for pointing out that the Ministry of the Environment is perhaps one of the most important ministries in the government. Another