

Routine Proceedings

ing an expectation of leadership in the care of the environment and preservation of natural and cultural heritage.

[*Translation*]

According to recent surveys, 90 per cent of Canadians want to have more information about our country's history. The national historic sites and related heritage programs go a long way toward filling this knowledge gap.

Each year, one-third of Canadians travel to participate in heritage activities across the country. Canada's national parks and national historic sites are cornerstones of our domestic and international tourism industry. More than 30,000 jobs are associated with Canada's national parks and historic sites. They make a contribution to our national economy in excess of one billion dollars per year.

Parks Canada, through its application of the principles and policies, will maintain the integrity of natural and cultural heritage, while ensuring that parks and sites continue to play a major role in the local, regional and national economy. It will do this by ensuring that the management decisions affecting these special places are made on sound and scientifically based knowledge.

[*English*]

The programs administered by Parks Canada will continue to have positive impacts on local communities. They will create jobs and assist sustainable land use and ecotourism.

• (1025)

Highlights of the new Parks Canada policy include:

First, an update of the Parks Canada mandate to include its responsibilities for national parks, national historic sites, historic canals, heritage railway stations, Canada's heritage rivers, marine conservation areas and federal heritage buildings;

Second, guiding principles stressing that natural and historic qualities will be maintained, that Canadians will be involved and consulted, and that an orderly framework is provided for the addition of new heritage areas; and

Third, a renewed emphasis placed upon partnership and co-operation with other levels of government, communities and the private sector.

[*Translation*]

This does not mean shifting the responsibility for preserving and creating Canada's heritage to others. Our history, traditions, and the environment require partnerships for implementation of successful heritage programs and, ultimately, a stronger leadership role for Parks Canada, nationally and internationally, that will demonstrate and advocate environmental and heritage ethics and practices.

National parks and national historic sites are symbols of the Canadian identity and make all Canadians proud. In fact, I am making this speech in what is designated as one of Canada's

national historic sites. And next to the Parliament buildings is one of the ends of the Rideau Canal, one of Canada's heritage waterways, administered by Parks Canada and subject to these new policies.

[*English*]

On that positive note I conclude my remarks on the Parks Canada guiding principles and operating policies.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity, as we debate Parks Canada "Guiding Principles and Operating Policies" tabled today in this House, to reaffirm that the Bloc Québécois will spare no effort to ensure that the beauty of Quebec's and Canada's wilderness is preserved.

The minister was so kind as to remind the people of Quebec and Canada what a key, positive role the Leader of the Opposition has played in protecting our national heritage, and I thank him for that.

But the minister is no doubt aware that the Bloc Québécois does not intend to just stand by if the government is remiss in preserving the cultural heritage of Quebec and Canada. I am convinced that, now more than ever, he knows that the Bloc Québécois will be every bit as vigilant with respect to natural heritage.

When the Leader of the Opposition was minister of the environment, he stated and I quote: "One of the areas in which the department is involved that I always find rewarding is the parks system. Parks Canada represents such beauty and positive things and is such a success that it is always encourages me to carry out my duties. It is one of Canada's greatest achievements, one which is recognized throughout the world. People must realize that our parks system is not only a beautiful sight for us. Other countries envy our national parks system".

In fact, Canada with its parks system is considered as a leader by conservation agencies world-wide. It is fitting for Parks Canada to be a source of inspiration for all future Canadian environmental policies.

The Bloc Québécois will make sure that the government fulfils its commitment to implement the concept of sustainable development, as stated in the final report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, the Brundtland Report, entitled "Our Common Future".

It should be pointed out that, based on the concept of sustainable development, economic development must be compatible with the long-term preservation of unmanaged ecosystems and survival processes. In Quebec and Canada, we have known for over a century that this wilderness must be preserved, not only for its unmistakable aesthetic beauty, but also because of the causal relationship to be made between what we do in that area and the benefits to be derived in terms of the environment.