

recommendations, too many of them to quote today. I will just mention a few of those extremely important recommendations.

The report recommends, given the continuing problems of operating some of the largest sewer treatment facilities and the difficulties in correcting combined sewer overflow problems, that the agreement between Canada and the United States continue to emphasize the improvement, maintenance and replacement of sewage treatment systems. This recommendation alone will require on the part of this so-called Progressive Conservative Government that it make a renewed commitment to sewage upgrading, particularly in regions like Vancouver, the Fraser Estuary, Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence River, downstream to the Maritimes. There is no evidence whatsoever on the part of the Government of a commitment of this nature. That is demonstrated by the fact that so far, despite renewed requests and pressure from my municipality in Metropolitan Toronto, not one penny has been devoted to the question of sewer separation in that large municipality.

The Royal Society also talked about the necessity of mapping ground water conditions around and under the Great Lakes Basin and the necessity of collecting data on geology, hydrology, soils and depth of water tables. But what we have seen so far on the part of the Government is a withdrawal from any substantial activity in terms of research and collection of further data with respect to toxicity and other activities.

The Royal Society recommends a comprehensive toxic substance strategy. It makes the point that we need an inventory of toxic chemicals found at potentially significant levels in the Great Lakes ecosystem. The second portion of that strategy is for action towards an effective long-term solution to leaking toxic waste dumps. The third strategy is for control actions against all identifiable sources of toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes Basin. Finally, it recommends the operation of modern toxic waste treatment centres in all regions of the Basin.

When I read the specific recommendations for a strategy, I ask myself what on earth can the Royal Society expect from a Government which has not been able to say one public word on a proposal by the United States, which is already two months old, with respect to the Niagara River. This has been kept a secret in Canada even though it is public south of the border. The Minister has had this on his desk for two months and not a word or an indication as to what the people in the Niagara region and around the Lake Ontario Basin can expect from this Government in reply to that proposal.

● (1900)

The Royal Society recommended the development of better data on contaminants in the food chain. This is an important new development which has emerged from a recent study by scientists in Ontario concerning contamination in the food chain resulting from evaporation of water from our lakes and precipitation in other areas.

In contrast to that recommendation, this Government has taken steps which have led to the virtual elimination from the face of the earth of a plan to build in Guelph the finest toxicology centre ever to be established. The Government has

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eliminated \$2.5 million of toxic chemical research programs which were approved every year by Treasury Board for specific research in the Niagara region. Then it eliminated some \$70 million in general research under the auspices of the National Research Council. Then the Minister comes into the House today with a shallow non-document which recites what we knew already. Neither does it give us any indication as to what specifically will be done to correct the situation and prevent deterioration along the St. Clair River. He tells us that he will improve certain laws. Laws will not enable us to clean up this mess or eliminate the possibility of this happening in the future because they do not impose specific controls on the performance of industry along that water body, or any international water body for that matter.

So here we have a fantastic report by the Royal Society of Canada, and an answer to my question exactly one week ago in this House by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) which said nothing and which had nothing to do with the content of the report. I am therefore anxious to know from the Parliamentary Secretary what on earth this Government will do—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please.

Mr. Caccia:—in relation to the recommendations contained in this report.

Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member will know, the Royal Society can expect a lot more consideration, co-operation, understanding and action from this Government than it ever got from his Government.

Mr. Caccia: What do you know?

Mr. Gurbin: I can say with some certainty because I sat and watched his Government do nothing for four or five years.

What we have from the Royal Society is an assessment which really did not tell us a lot more than was already pretty obvious. We have major problems in specific areas and there are ways to try and deal with those problems.

● (1905)

Time after time I hear the Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) ask questions, give responses, and make comments. I wonder why he is so limited in his readings of some things. Why, for instance, would he not take a look at the Government's new initiatives in the toxic chemical research area? Take for example the wildlife toxicology fund. The Member takes great exception to this. It is politically easy for him to talk about herring gull aid programs in spite of the fact that he knows that the major and important part of those programs are still in process.

Mr. Caccia: Not in full.

Mr. Gurbin: I agree totally that it is not fully in process. However, in the time I have I would like to be very specific because the Member likes specificity. He asks a hundred