

*Supply*

Members of this House therefore understand, Mr. Speaker, how much is asked of us as a society. We must correct past mistakes and put our country on a new path, one of imagination and concern for harmony with our natural environment.

In the past, we approached our environment in two ways. First, we sought to restore it in regions where massive industrialization threatened the ecosystem. At the same time, we tried to protect areas, like parks, which are essential elements of our natural heritage.

All levels of government have dedicated themselves to this kind of action, which the Government of Canada considers just as important.

Nevertheless, we must now turn our efforts to something else, which affects the economy, the environment and behaviour. In a word, we must take a new approach, sustainable development.

When economic progress threatens our environment, Mr. Speaker, it not only lacks vision but it also exposes us to grave dangers. Indeed, it is no longer progress but a senseless race to ruin and collective destruction. The triumph of human creativity provides the ultimate irony. What has made our species great and given it amazing domination over its habitat now threatens to lead it to ruin.

• (1720)

[*English*]

The knowledge and progress of centuries of human endeavour have been translated into practices which threaten to destroy us. The alternative, our only alternative, to apply this same energy, knowledge and creativity to sustaining our economies in a manner completely harmonious with our environment.

We know that climate change caused by greenhouse gases has the potential to unleash radical and devastating impacts on our planet.

We know that the stratospheric ozone layer is being depleted and that each 1 per cent decline in that layer is likely to produce a 4 to 6 per cent increase in skin cancers.

We know that every day an entire genetic species is disappearing from our planet, an organic creation which will never, ever repeat itself.

We know that acid rain from sulphur and nitrogen oxide emissions is killing lakes and forests around the globe and that here at home some 14,000 lakes are now considered dead.

Isn't it amazing, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

Yes, those myriad lakes that we are counting now, since so many have started to die. Mr. Speaker, the riding of Argenteuil—Papineau is unique in terms of its beauty and its many lakes that provide a magnificent environment for people in Montreal who want to live in the country but not too far from the city.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) talked about an agenda for society, and he referred to the changes in values that were necessary. Canadians must all do their share to bring about these changes, both individually and collectively. Environmental partnership should be seen as a new social contract, one more link between ourselves and our country, and the entire planet as well.

Mr. Speaker, I realize my time has almost expired, but I know you will let me know when it has, so I will continue, because I have some important things to say in my notes.

Mr. Speaker, there is no simple way to make such sweeping changes, and Hon. Members understand that, but we are faced with a vital necessity. We cannot expect the Government to solve our environmental problems with a few waves of its magic wand.

Mr. Speaker, I imagine you know what it is like when you are driving your car and all of a sudden the driver in the car in front decides to empty his ashtray out the window. It happened to me. Of course, I immediately called the police, and this person was fortunately arrested and he paid the requisite fine. It is incredible that in 1989, somebody would empty his ashtray just like that when we know, Mr. Speaker, that cigarette stubs, as somebody told me, take 10 or 20 years to decompose. So I was quite shocked, but I am glad I acted the way I did, because it must have cost him a few bucks.

Again, Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech, the Government mentioned it would establish an Environmental Partners Fund. I can inform the House that my constituents are eagerly awaiting the details of this program. Mr. Speaker, my riding borders on the Ottawa River, and it is really interesting to see how many constituents go fishing in the Ottawa River. There is also a certain amount of