

Rather, the NDP House Leader will be making such amendments in the light of your ruling, I am not anticipating it, but, in any event such that the debate can continue. We in the Liberal Party have some things we consider to be important and want to say about the environment. We hope, whatever the outcome of the consideration of the points of order, it will not result in the motion being swept aside so that we have to go on to other business.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the Members. I do not think that was the intention of the Deputy Government House Leader when he made his proposal this morning. We will start the debate immediately with the Hon. Member for Saanich—Gulf Islands

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be addressing the House today during Environment Week. It is a shame that there has been such a delay in the debate which has forced the school children, who were here to observe the beginning of it, to leave.

The Government has endorsed the recommendations of the Brundtland Commission. It has failed, however, to demonstrate a willingness to go beyond rhetoric and deliver the substantive changes necessary. Decisive political action is required now. The motion before the House is an humble attempt to begin that process.

Yesterday in the House the Prime Minister responded to a question from the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan about economic decisions and the environmental assessments connected to them. In June 1988 the Prime Minister said: "We have established mechanisms to ensure that economic decisions take environmental impact into account". He was asked whether the cuts to VIA Rail had been considered in this context. The Prime Minister was very concise. He answered: "No". The beginning of this motion addresses the requirement for environmental assessment. As I stand today in the House I want to tell Members opposite that they must make a fundamental change in their thinking about what is required, if we are to make the changes necessary and solve the real environmental problems in our country.

Supply

Another example of the kinds of contradiction that are myriad within government policy is the fact that the Government is still giving our tax money to the oil companies. For example, in Alberta there is \$1 billion for the Hibernia oil field, \$650 million for the OSLO tar sands plant, and \$325 million for the Lloydminster heavy oil upgrader. This is in the context of being told over and over again that we must reduce our dependency on fossil fuels and that the effects of global warming are so extreme it puts all human life at risk.

• (1140)

In the same context we have cuts to conservation and alternative energy programs. Conservation and renewable energy funding has declined from \$400 million per year between 1980 and 1984 to a paltry \$49 million for 1989–1990. This is from the post budget departmental briefing estimates.

When we talk about environmental assessment, we also must consider the larger picture of over-all government policies: why the Government is giving money to one portion of the energy sector and taking it away from the kind of conservation and renewable energy sources so necessary to form real alternatives.

The information we have before us on the effects of global warming is most frightening. In the environment committee we heard reports from Jim McNeill, the former Executive Director of the Brundtland Commission. He talked movingly about the testimony of the President of the Maldives, an island nation, before the Brundtland Commission, that if global warming continues at the same rate, that country whose highest elevation is 1.5 metres above sea level—that is about five feet—will disappear beneath the waves in 40 to 60 years.

When we think in those terms and see that our Government is still using our tax dollars to fund fossil fuels, we wonder where the sense of it all is. Global warming will cause a phenomenon that we have not yet experienced, a phenomenon of environmental refugees on a scale unheard of to date. We are talking about multi-millions of people trying to get to higher levels because the oceans will make their homelands disappear.