

there is no easy way. We fully support the policy according to which interest rates should be reduced in a responsible manner and for good.

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[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Government of British Columbia announced plans to log the upper half of the Carmanah Valley.

As the Minister of the Environment knows, the all-party Standing Committee on Environment unanimously calls for the accurate and complete inventory of old growth forests on Vancouver Island, including Carmanah, and that is a legal responsibility of the federal government.

Since permanent publicly supportable decisions can only be made when the facts are put on the table, and since the B.C. government has purposely withheld the real facts on both inventory and the impact of logging in Carmanah, will the minister arrange for the completion of such an inventory and a complete impact assessment so that Carmanah and other Vancouver Island watersheds can be protected?

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. friend has noted, the decision calls first for the establishment of a park to protect the giant trees in the upper part of the valley. For this we are pleased, of course, but it also mentions that there could be logging in the other part of the valley.

The decision says that this will be done provided studies are conducted to authorize the logging. We are concerned with the other part of the decision. We should be vigilant to make sure the conclusion of the studies justifies the logging of trees. If it is not possible to log any trees there without endangering the other part of the park, then we must be very vigilant.

In terms of assessment, I have asked my department to look into the possibility of being involved. I am waiting for a report to know what the federal jurisdiction is.

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also to the Minister of the Environment. He is aware that the Government of British Columbia has admitted that the necessary studies to determine whether or not logging in the upper half of the valley

would have a negative consequence on the giant spruce at the bottom of the valley have simply not been done.

During this past 18 months, while Canadians have waited for the announcement of a decision on the Carmanah Valley, the studies have not been done. I think it is clear that Canadians expect proper environmental impact studies to be done before, not after projects.

Would the minister, who has spoken positively about the Carmanah in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada, take this opportunity to lay to rest the issue of conflict in British Columbia and announce that the necessary studies will be done now, not once logging begins?

Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has offered to the B.C. government to participate in the cost and operation of the study for that part of the valley. We have not received a positive answer as yet.

That is why I have asked my department to look into what the federal jurisdiction is to determine if we have ways to step in and participate in the process. When I have an answer, I will be able to report to the House.

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COMPETITION BUREAU

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister. Yesterday we learned that the Quebec Superior Court ruled that the Competition Bureau was unconstitutional. This has the potential of rendering the Competition Bureau completely impotent. When you add this to the questions that the Canadian consumers and the business community have regarding the whole competition process, this is a great concern.

Will the government be appealing this ruling? In the interim, will the government be implementing and abiding by the rulings already made by the Competition Tribunal on this matter? If not, there is going to be a tremendous amount of chaos in the competition area.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the seriousness with which the hon. member has approached this question. On behalf of the minister, who is out of the House on government business, let me say that the government is taking this judgment very seriously, along with the Department of Justice. Departments are evaluating the implications as to what course of action will come from