

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the third point of the resolution deals with Canadian fresh and costal waters. The House is aware that 18 months ago, the Deputy Prime Minister defined an all inclusive policy for the Federal Government dealing with the quality of water and Canadian waters. This policy provides for general guidelines which were later refined by the Canadian Council of Environment Ministers. Moreover, last April, we announced that to protect the quality of Canadian waters, we had been involved in the last few months, in fact close to two years in a quality impact study of papermill wastes.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, papermill wastes are responsible for one of the major pollution problems in Canada. Our Government, our Department, together with the provincial governments is carrying out a testing program that will tell us exactly what is discharged by pulp and paper mills into our rivers. We know there are two very serious problems, and I am referring to dioxin and furan, two very dangerous toxic substances. So far, on the basis of the information requested and received from the pulp and paper mills, we know that furan and dioxin levels in Canadian rivers are far too high, sometimes alarmingly so. In some cases, this has lead to a ban on fishing, and in others, I am thinking of the St. Maurice River, for instance, people have been advised not to eat too much of a certain type of fish.

When the testing program has been completed, Mr. Speaker, by the end of 1990 we will be able to draft a set of very strict regulations that will apply to all pulp and paper mills throughout Canada, to control furan and dioxin levels.

We know there is a set of regulations adopted under the Fisheries Act which, since 1971, is supposed to regulate the problem of toxic substances in water, covering the entire range of toxic substances, in addition to furan and dioxin.

The problem is that these regulations are obsolete and do not apply to pulp and paper mills built before 1971, which happen to be the majority as well as the worst polluters.

We are also working on a set of regulations that will apply to all pulp and paper mills in respect of all other

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toxic substances, and we think we will be ready in two or three years, since this is an extremely complex operation.

Today, in Montreal, I had the pleasure of announcing a very special program which illustrates the kind of action we want to take. We have now entered the age of environmental action. People are concerned, and they want us to give them a sense of direction.

People want to know what governments are prepared to do, how, and why.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is now in the active mode. We have passed legislation, approved regulations, and provided for clean-up programs. Today, I announced that the \$110 million for the clean-up of the St. Lawrence is now operational. We have signed a harmonization agreement with Québec, so that Québec can complement the efforts of the federal action plan. Mr. Speaker, concrete action is now the order of the day.

We have all made too many speeches. Everybody makes speeches on the environment. What we need now is action! I hope that from now on, we will only hear about action plans and that such plans will be integrated into a master plan. As I see it, my responsibility as Environment Minister is to respond to these expectations and to translate the concern of citizens into concrete action within a comprehensive plan, which I intend to submit to the Government within the next few months.

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On a point of order, the Hon. Member for Calgary West.

Mr. Hawkes: I am sorry to interrupt the question, Mr. Speaker. There have been consultations among the Parties and I think you would find unanimous consent in the Chamber for the following statement. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Beaches—Woodbine (Mr. Young):

That notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 45(5)(a), any recorded division on today's allotted day motion be deferred until six o'clock p.m., Monday, June 12, 1989.

I think the Chamber would be well served with that certitude.