

### Supply

with his U.S. counterpart. On that occasion I was astonished, as were other Members of Parliament, to learn that the then Deputy Prime Minister of Canada had no concrete idea of how to proceed. All he would say was that he hoped the next time he and his counterpart met they would be joined by scientists and officials from both countries:

—to try to move this very difficult problem forward.

Seven months later the Hon. Member for Davenport, then Minister of the Environment, gave Parliament a genuinely frightening insight into the weakness and aimlessness of his Government's attitude to the vital issue of acid rain. When my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser), asked about the possibility of U.S. acid rain legislation, as recorded at page 28983 of *Hansard*, November 18, 1983, he was told by that Hon. Member that the issue was one that:

—the President of the United States must resolve himself in order to come to a decision.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. McMillan:** In January, 1984, immediately following President Reagan's State of the Union address in which he said that he would study the problem, my colleague, the Hon. Member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Darling), asked the Member who moved this motion today whether he could respond as to what the Government intended to do in view of the stalemate with the Americans on acid rain. The answer was that our approach is "to continue to make representations."

Clearly the real environmental problem was that the Party opposite was in a fog, had no idea what to do, and lacked the desire to find out. The Hon. Member's inability to deal with the issue may simply have reflected, with all due respect to him, his former leader's insensitivity to the importance Canadians placed and still place on the environment in general. Let me quote from *Hansard* of June 11, 1984, page 4528, when Mr. Trudeau rose in this House and tried to defend the recession his policies had brought to Canadians:

Now we are seeing Governments everywhere, provincial, federal, and in other countries, trying to balance this with the need to keep jobs going and the workers at work. High unemployment figures would be affected adversely if we were to close down some plants because they had not moved as quickly as we would like in reducing their levels of emissions.

Set aside for the moment the aspersions that those words cast on provincial Governments which have shown themselves ready to co-operate on environmental policies, at least as far as acid rain is concerned. Apart from that, the statement also slanders Canadians who have shown consistently that they care about the environment and are prepared to make reasonable sacrifices to protect it.

The present Government, working co-operatively with the provinces and industry, has already proven how miserably Mr. Trudeau underestimated what could be done by Canadians. Over the past 18 months the new Government has put in place the most comprehensive environmental protection program in Canadian history. At the same time it has created almost

600,000 new jobs and pulled Canada through the most grim economic times since the 1930s. All this it has done while whittling the massive deficit the Liberals bequeathed to Canadians.

In other words, the Government has demonstrated that it can pursue economic and environmental objectives in tandem without a trade off between the two objectives.

It is pitifully easy to list what the Liberal Government of the day did not do. It had no domestic acid rain control strategy in place. There were no specific goals by which each province would cut emissions, and no attempt to identify which specific sources in each province would be expected to reduce emissions. There were no plans to finance reduction programs.

**Mr. Caccia:** There were.

**Mr. McMillan:** There were studies of vehicle emission standards, and some go back as far as 1975, but there was no program for actually doing anything about them. Furthermore, acid rain had never been a top priority in bilateral discussions between the U.S. President and the then Prime Minister. Indeed, negotiations on the issue had been broken off altogether by Canada in 1982. The whole abysmal story of the previous Government's ineptitude and lack of concern was contained in the two reports of the parliamentary subcommittee on acid rain. I remind you that a majority of that committee's members were from the Government party. The second report of that committee was aptly titled *Time Lost*, symbolizing the time which had been lost in getting progress with the Americans on acid rain in the years the Liberals were in office between 1980 and late 1984.

The first step taken by this Government, after it was elected in September of 1984, was to categorically reject practised indecision, Yankee bashing and woolly commitments. We promised action, and we have been delivering, on the acid rain question as on others in the environmental field. We have in fact made more progress on the acid rain issue in 18 months than the Liberal Party was able to achieve in 18 years in office.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** We obtained specific commitments from the seven eastern provinces to reduce emissions by 50 per cent, or more than 2 million metric tonnes, by 1994, based on emission figures prevailing in 1980. Ontario and Quebec have already announced specific regulations to achieve the reductions necessary in those provinces. Other provinces will follow suit in a very few weeks. Negotiations have begun which will provide co-operative federal-provincial funding to implement these programs. As much, Sir, as \$150 million will be provided for direct acid rain abatement from the federal treasury alone. Tighter light-duty vehicle emission standards will take effect for the 1988 model year beginning in September, 1987. Allowable levels of NOx emissions will be slashed by 45 per cent, equalling the American standards which were three times more stringent than those prevailing in Canada when the Liberals were in office. Specific technology projects designed