

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

ACID RAIN—PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN NEW YORK

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound—Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians rejoice after hearing the Prime Minister's (Mr. Mulroney) comments on acid rain yesterday in New York City. We can be proud that we have a Prime Minister who is willing to take a strong stance on such a vital issue.

Previous governments were unable to achieve any progress in this fight. Now there is a renewed hope that the two nations will unify to control acid rain.

The fight on acid rain is taking place on many fronts. The Hon. Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) and the Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) have taken this country's message to the United States on many occasions. Up until now, although acid precipitation from the United States contributed significantly to the problem, that country's administration has been unwilling to participate in an acid rain control program.

As a Member for a region that is greatly affected by acid precipitation, I look forward to the Prime Minister taking a strong message on acid rain directly to the President when they meet in Washington on April 27.

I would also like to congratulate the Prime Minister on the award he received last night from the Americas Society.

* * *

● (1415)

APARTHEID

SOUTH AFRICA—GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO SILENCE ANTI-APARTHEID PROTESTS

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, since its independence Botswana has shown that blacks and whites can live together and prosper in harmony. It has also emerged as one of the more successful democracies in the Third World.

Instead of learning from the example of Botswana, the South African Government has grown increasingly repressive in its attempts to silence the opponents of apartheid.

The South African Government, in keeping with its tradition of crushing any form of anti-apartheid protest, has used the South African Defence Force to initiate a number of border raids into neighbouring countries and has attempted to justify these raids by claiming them to be strikes against ANC insurgents.

Yesterday we witnessed the latest of these attacks on the city of Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, in which four people were killed, at least two of whom were citizens of Botswana.

Oral Questions

I urge the Canadian Government to condemn this incursion into Botswana and to increase its pressure on the South African Government to end its menacing raids on neighbouring southern African countries which, unlike South Africa, are trying to develop along non-racist lines.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

ACID RAIN—PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN NEW YORK

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, last night the Prime Minister spoke in New York. In March, 1985, the Prime Minister said, after his first summit with the President, that he had an agreement with President Reagan on research for acid rain.

In March, 1986, our Prime Minister again announced with much fanfare that he had obtained an agreement with President Reagan on research for acid rain.

In March, 1987, at the conclusion of another one of their annual summits, the Prime Minister said for the third time that he had an agreement with the President for research projects on acid rain.

Last night in New York the Prime Minister said that people who claim that the issue of acid rain needs more research are attempting, to use his own words, "to avoid action". Terrific! Finally the Prime Minister has recognized what most Canadians have already known—we do not need more research; we need some action on acid rain.

In the absence of the Prime Minister, I ask the Deputy Prime Minister: Does the Prime Minister really believe what he said last night and, if so, why has he wasted the last three and a half years?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, frankly I find that an incredible question coming from the Leader of a Party which had the opportunity for years to take initiatives on acid rain and did not.

The Prime Minister of Canada and all his Government take enormously seriously the threat to our environment, the threat to our way of life, the threat to our resources of acid rain.

Mr. Riis: What have you done?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): We are asked what we have done. What we have done is patiently, persistently, and vigorously pursued with the United States the possibility of achieving a practical step forward.

The Prime Minister took the occasion of his speech after receipt of a prominent award in New York yesterday to restate