

Private Members' Business

bourg, in the middle of the Parc des Laurentides, we have the calibrated basin of Lake Laflamme, something which can best be described as an open air laboratory.

In their survey on atmospheric pollutants drifting over long distances, Environment Canada and three Quebec universities—Laval, McGill, *Université du Québec*—have been working for more than three years on a complex model to predict the impact of acid water from melted snow and ice on the water habitat and the organisms that live there.

Thanks to the work of this dedicated team the integrated model's quantitative and qualitative parameters have been checked against the on-site data collected during the spring thaw at Lake Laflamme.

Research has been extended outside the calibrated basin because the model is now being used in a project to find out the effect of spring run-offs mixed with acid rain over Quebec's southern regions.

This open air laboratory also enables Environment Canada researchers to monitor rain and surface water quality, thus highlighting the beneficial effects of the federal-provincial sulphur oxide emissions.

Considerable progress has been made in dealing with the most important water problems such as the effect of acid rain on water ecosystems, toxic contamination, climate changes and municipal and industrial water demand management.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government is committed to maintaining its leadership role in science and to promoting continued co-operation with the provinces in order to co-ordinate efforts.

The St. Lawrence action plan and the establishment of the St. Lawrence Centre in Montreal through which the federal government will spend \$100 million over five years to clean up, protect and preserve this river symbolize the intensification of federal-provincial efforts to promote efficient co-operation and consultations among multiple partners.

The government also recognizes the water-savings aspect and will focus its efforts on maintaining a balance between growing socio-economic demands and the continued capacity of our freshwater resources within the context of sustainable development.

[English]

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that the member for Okanagan—Shuswap feels compelled to put such a motion, given this government's bad record on water.

In November 1984, \$45 million was chopped from the budget of Environment Canada, including a 25 per cent cut to the Canadian Wildlife Service and eliminating programs like the herring gull study in the Great Lakes. The government received good advice but chose to ignore it. In September 1985, the report of the inquiry on federal water policy, headed by Peter Pearse, provided the government with a blueprint for a federal water policy.

However, in 1987 the minister of the day released a flimsy collection of one-page statements optimistically called "A Federal Water Policy". It was descriptive of the problems facing Canadians but lacked substance. It promised to consider legislation to ensure safe drinking water but only in areas of federal jurisdiction. This promise was recycled in the Throne Speech in April 1989 and is recycled again in the present Minister of the Environment's recently released discussion paper. Unkept promises, that is the trademark of this government.

Today Canada does not yet have model legislation on water nor a clearly defined policy. The 1987 paper promised to strengthen federal legislation to prohibit the export of water. The 1987 paper promised to strengthen the approval process under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Two and a half years later the Oldman Dam is the subject of a court ruling. Why? Because the Minister of Transport fails to comply with the guidelines of environmental assessment.

After promising strength the government delivers weakness. To make matters worse, it has now been one month since the Federal Court decision and still this government refuses to comply with the ruling. What a degree of hypocrisy.

We must conclude that there is an alarming pattern emerging on the issue of water. This government reduces spending on research, has not kept promises of new legislation since 1985 and poorly enforces existing laws. Unfortunately, this pattern is typical of the over-all environmental policy of this government.

Take, for instance, the mythical environmental assessment legislation. It was promised by the Progressive