

Supply

cut-backs, but the environment is not important enough to let people have a say.

Some areas in my riding experience 40 per cent unemployment. If the government were to impose environmental regulations without consultation, there could be detrimental effects which hurt a lot of people.

Is the member in favour of hearings across Canada and why are they not as important as hearings on the GST and VIA?

Ms. Clancy: Mr. Speaker, first, in answer to the member for Cumberland—Colchester, the people of Canada have been telling governments for 20 years their opinions on the environment. Unfortunately, the people of Canada did not have an opportunity to tell the government their opinions on the GST because it was sprung on them a scant two years ago in embryo.

With regard to the environment not being important enough, that is not worthy of the member for Cumberland—Colchester. He knows we all feel the environment is important. I do not deny that. What I deny is the way they go about working it through.

This is similar to a suggestion that we hold more hearings on child care. Clean out your ears, gentlemen. The people of Canada have told you, and told you, and told you, what they want the government to do about child care. They have told you, and told you, and told you, what they want the government to do about the environment. They want it cleaned up. They want it cleaned up now, and they want it clean for their kids. They do not want a 7 per cent goods and services tax, but you brought that up, I did not.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiaq):

[Editor's Note: member spoke in Inuktituk.]

Mr. Speaker, as an aboriginal person, I would just like give some ideas of what the aboriginal peoples in the north have always maintained about themselves and the environment.

The concern for the environment has been around for years. All of a sudden it has become a buzz word in more recent days. The aboriginal people have always been concerned about the environment. We have always considered ourselves true environmentalists. We have posters that say: "Take care of the land because it takes care of you". We have always maintained that we are

very much in touch with the environment and our surroundings.

Although environmentalists and the public have shown that they are willing to do something about the environment and are willing to suffer some inconveniences, the government has been slow to react. One good example is the Green Paper that just came out. As my hon. colleague from Halifax said earlier, people have been concerned about the environment for some years but nobody has been willing to do anything.

While we have been waiting for some policy directions from the government for over a year, all of a sudden we are told that it has to do a study and consult. It could have been consulting for the past year and we could have been a little further ahead. Over the past year, maybe the ozone layer has become bigger. It is getting bigger. Now is the time to do something about those kinds of things.

The aboriginal peoples have always shown that they care about the environment. They object to some developments that did not have proper environmental safeguards. I will give you some examples. One is James Bay. The Quebec government was prepared to go full steam ahead to build a dam and basically did not really care about the concerns of the Cree, Inuit and the environmentalists from around that area. We are going to get into the same problems that we are getting into now in James Bay. For example, take the people from the South Moresby and Temagami area and now the Innu people in Goose Bay.

In my own riding of Nunatsiaq, there is a proposal for a uranium mine. Last Monday the people of Baker Lake showed that they are overwhelmingly against the mine starting up in Baker Lake. The government has not taken a stand one way or the other as to whether it is willing to approve it or not. It has not decided whether it should give more money to those people that want to make presentations to the Federal Environmental Assessment Review organization. What the people of Baker Lake are saying is that they want the government to give them some funding so that they can adequately and ably argue or debate the issue of whether there should be uranium mine in Baker Lake. They are not being given that chance because they are being told that there are time and funding limits to the whole question of the proposed uranium mine.