

*Supply*

For example, I heard Opposition critics bemoan the fact that, later this evening in Washington, international environment champion Mrs. Brundtland will present an award to the head of the Government of Canada and our country's Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) as recognition for his and his Government's efforts, but particularly for the achievements of all Canadians in the environmental sector.

Indeed this is the time when political biases should be set aside just so all Canadians can rally and be proud about the award to be given to the head of our Government.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to remind the House that, on the acid rain problem, this Government has taken the most radical measures ever contemplated and that, two years ago, it signed with seven Canadian provinces agreements which will reduce Canadian acid rain emissions by 50 per cent by 1994.

We have good reason to complain about our American friends. But we must recognize that we have also been at fault and that we are still at fault. We also produce acid rain emissions in Canada, but this Government has taken action and reached agreements with the provinces that will result in a 50 per cent reduction in acid rain emissions in five years.

We are now in a position to tell our American friends it is their turn to act! That is what we hope to gain in the negotiations which should start in the coming months.

Mr. Speaker, I will rapidly go over what we have done for the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, the commitments that have been made, the programs that have been voted, as well as what we have done on the international scene.

[*English*]

—because Canada has a very prestigious record on the international scene. Canada has hosted a series of international meetings to address global atmospheric problems and has participated in numerous others.

At the 1987 meeting in Montreal the protocol to reduce ozone-depleting CFCs was developed. Next came the landmark Toronto conference on the changing atmosphere which resulted in the loudest call to date for international action.

A meeting of international legal and policy experts, hosted by the Government of Canada, was convened here in Ottawa last February. The experts drafted international legal principles for use in the development of a framework convention for protection of the atmosphere and a convention on climate change.

Although Canada only contributes 2 per cent of the chemical blamed for depleting the ozone layer, I announced on February 20 an immediate reduction of 85 per cent in CFC use and a commitment to the complete elimination of controlled CFCs within the next 10 years. This announcement was followed in subsequent weeks by a similar announcement and commitment on the part of the United States and European countries.

Incidentally, it was Canada that took the lead in 1987 in developing and adopting the Montreal protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer. The momentum we established has galvanized the world into action.

We have committed ourselves to the principle of environmentally sustainable economic development. This concept has become a clarion call for all nations which are serious about their environmental priority. Thus the concept of sustainable development became a cornerstone of the April 3 Speech from the Throne.

Domestically, we have maintained the pace which was set during our first mandate. Most recently, my colleague, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Bouchard), and I announced jointly an accelerated attack on air pollution in Canada. We are putting in place the most stringent regulations that technology will allow to control emissions from internal combustion engines that burn fossil fuels.

[*Translation*]

But the most important decision in this field, Mr. Speaker, to implement the concept of sustainable development is the one taken by the Right Hon. Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) when he decided to set up a new Cabinet Committee chaired by the Environment Minister, the purpose of which is to put environmental concerns at the heart of government activity and all government decisions.

From now on, Mr. Speaker, the major decisions on the economy, energy, agriculture, fisheries and oceans will first be referred at some step in the process to the Environment Committee, which will suggest to the Government a way to harmonize all aspects of the environment, the economy, energy and Canadians' needs.