

more active, both in Canada and abroad, than had been the case in recent years.

The hon. member will recall the exemplary service of Canadian Forces during the crisis in Oka and the Gulf war. Furthermore, I am sure the hon. member is aware of the peacekeeping role that Canada continues to play in various places throughout the world.

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, as members of this House know, the Fraser River is one of the most important tributaries in all of Canada. It has played an integral role in B.C.'s development and it is vital to our fisheries, our industry, our agriculture and our recreation.

Decades of abuse have left the Fraser River seriously injured. We are pumping raw sewage, toxic chemicals and practically every form of garbage available into its waters.

We need only look at the river to realize its precarious position. When you realize the high concentration of toxins in existence, you know that action is needed immediately.

We are fortunate that there are alternatives available to stop polluting the Fraser River. What is unfortunate is the fact that this government lacks the political will to effect these changes.

The government announced, with great fanfare, its commitment to clean up the Fraser. I would support it in this effort, I really would, except in reality it is trying to pull the wool over our collective eyes.

The government's green plan commits \$100 million to clean up the Fraser. We are left with the impression that this money will be spent immediately to address the pollution problems in the river, but that is not the case. It will be spent over six years. Each year the Fraser will only have a fraction of this money allotted to the clean-up.

We have also been given no specifics, there are no goals and no timetables. We cannot evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

Adjournment Debate

When will we actually see a plan to stop the flow of pollution into the Fraser River? No one knows. When will we see a plan to remove the toxins already there? No one knows.

The plot surrounding this announcement has thickened like the sludge you can see floating on the surface of the river, for the government is tossing out green plan platitudes with its right hand while its left hand pulls out of existing, necessary environmental promises and guides the dumping of toxic soil near the river mouth.

As the House knows, Richmond, B.C. will be the unfortunate recipient of toxic soil from the old Expo site in Vancouver. The public was not informed, even though it puts nearby farmland and the fisheries at risk.

In Question Period I asked the Minister of the Environment to show British Columbians that he is a friend of the environment. He should have halted the dumping of this toxic soil and announced an environmental assessment review plan in accordance with his own government's guidelines. It would have demonstrated his commitment to a new era of environmental leadership. He refused to do so.

Surely this government can see the folly in pledging to clean up a river and then in the next breath supporting a toxic dump on federal lands near its shores.

Can the minister guarantee that this dump will be stopped? Regrettably the government's guilt is compounded by its back-handed withdrawal of its obligation to the Debris Control Board. This agency is responsible for clearing the Fraser of its debris. It is so successful that it is able to recover enough soil to fill three football fields to a depth of one metre each year.

What has this government done to this long standing clean-up pledge? It has reneged on it. Not only did it fail to come through with half of its share on April 1, it has now announced it will be pulling out completely of the debris control plan within 10 months.

Can anyone make a radical leap of faith and explain away this blatant hypocrisy? Can anyone with an ounce of common sense figure out this government's action?

The government knows its green plan has been a big disappointment. It knows its all talk, no action leadership has seriously damaged its credibility and the credibility of its environmental plan.