

National Parks

attraction for Canadians and for all the inhabitants of this globe who enjoy and love the beauty of nature. I am sure that all Hon. Members will concur with my conclusions.

Mr. Waddell: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, about the order of speakers. I have not had a chance to talk with the Parliamentary Secretary. I will be speaking on the Bill from my Party's point of view, and I wonder if he would not want to wait until I had made my contribution, following which he could reply perhaps to both Parties. Or does the Hon. Member want to keep to the order of speaking now?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): If the Hon. Member is going to make some sort of arrangement, he should do it before Private Members' Hour. I did not see the Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell) rising. I saw the Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment (Mr. Gurbin) rising and, therefore, in order that we can carry on and not waste any time in this Private Members' Hour, I will recognize the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment.

Mr. G. M. Gurbin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, we did not have an opportunity to discuss the Hon. Member's suggestion previously. I think it is a useful suggestion and I will keep it in mind for another occasion.

I was most interested in the comments of the mover of the motion, particularly because of his past experience with this issue and the responsibility he has had along the way for environmental issues. I believe his comments bear considerable weight on that ground alone. A number of environmental problems exist in this country, a number of opportunities have been missed historically and a number of wrongs need to be righted. I would like to indicate as clearly as I can, Mr. Speaker, that the sense of this motion itself is something which I can support, and I feel that probably all Hon. Members of this House can support this Bill with very little difficulty.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gurbin: There is no argument with many of the details which the Hon. Member has placed before us in terms of geography, the uniqueness of the area and the real importance that area has from an ecological point of view. However, I take exception to the premise that what is in the motion has not already been accomplished. There is the suggestion that commitments, or interpretations of commitments, may not have been fulfilled by this Government. I can give several recent examples to the Hon. Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia), Mr. Speaker, which pertain directly to this point.

I am sure the Hon. Member will recall that during an Opposition Day one week ago commitments were made by members of the Government on the control of acid rain. During the election campaign there were commitments made that within a period of six months the Government would bring forward an action plan which would provide tangible and real progress in the control of acid rain in this country. That

was a commitment which was made, and this Party, this Government, has fulfilled that commitment to the letter. The Government has fulfilled almost precisely the tone and intent of the commitment. We have fulfilled our obligation to the Canadian public, and we intend to make sure that legislation will be enacted in that way. There are other examples of commitments we have fulfilled which relate not only to acid rain but in terms of the CN double-tracking and a broad range of issues which developed and were difficult to deal with because appropriate action had not been taken in the past. If action was taken in the past, it was too slow or inappropriate, which put at risk a number of areas including the environment. Lack of action put at risk native rights and economic development in the West as far as the double-tracking was concerned. Because of the fact that commitments have not been fulfilled in the past or in terms of process had not been conducted properly we are left with these problems. I know the Hon. Member will be interested in the fact that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski), because of the interventions he was able to make, is in the process of working out a conclusion to what was a totally unsatisfactory situation from almost everyone's point of view. So it looks as though we are going to solve another one of the problems we were left with.

The Hon. Member mentioned commitments made by the Progressive Conservative Party during the last election campaign to groups which were interested in establishing a national park in the South Moresby area. I can tell the Hon. Member that the commitment made during the last several months has been fulfilled. The Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Blais-Grenier) has had at least two meetings directly with the Minister of the Environment of British Columbia and is actively trying to develop a program which would see that area become a protected area. As the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Fraser) indicated, it will be protected on some basis, but there are a number of options to be considered. The final conclusion depends on continuing discussions and decisions which need to be taken by the Government of British Columbia. But our commitment has already been fulfilled. It is another example of action rather than just discussion.

We have had in the past many examples of recognition, for instance that of the terrific abuse of our forests historically. I personally have had meetings with native groups from different areas and they have told me about the great abuse of our forests in the past. That abuse cannot be corrected in one month or six months, Mr. Speaker, because it has developed and evolved over many years. During the last 16 years, the Government of Canada has been controlled by one particular Party. It has been controlled in part by Hon. Members who were Ministers of the Crown and who, despite good intentions, good words and, perhaps, even good understanding, were really incapable of achieving action which would result in the saving of the areas of importance in an ecological sense as well as from a forestry point of view. There were things which we would have liked to have seen accomplished in the past which have not been accomplished. The Minister of the Environment