

*Statements by Ministers*

The past week has been marked by the presence of people from all over the world, people who have given us new perspectives and a new understanding of the global scope of pollution and of environmental concerns in other countries.

At the national level there can be no doubt that the major polluters in Canada include companies that manufacture, use and dispose of chemical compounds in violation of good sense, good citizenship and good corporate behaviour. They need to be dealt with—and dealt with harshly—through tougher laws and regulations and through more vigorous enforcement of the laws and regulations already on the Government statute books.

However, realistically, if every company in Canada were to become environmentally responsible this very day only part of the equation necessary to improve the Canadian environment would be in place. Individual citizens, through decisions they make daily, have a profound effect on the environment. That is why the focus on individual responsibility for clean air, on the dangers of misfueling and of mismanagement of hazardous home products, is so vital. The sorry fact is that today a million Canadians are using leaded gas in cars designed for unleaded fuel. Another one-half million deliberately tamper with their catalytic converter systems. In so doing they damage their cars, their environment and the health of their children.

Since repeated research has shown that Canadians are firmly committed to a better environment, even if that involves some economic sacrifices, the key to change is education. We do not want to talk to those already convinced, but to the millions of people who may not be aware of how they personally can make a difference in our goals of cleaner, safer air, water and soil.

Therefore, I invite Members on all sides of the House to join me in getting two messages across. First, the most serious international tragedies of our day, for example in Ethiopia, are the direct result of environmental problems. Canadians who have opened their hearts, as well as their purses, should learn more about how the world can avoid future catastrophes. Second, Canadians should be given the opportunity to learn how they as individuals can make their immediate environment better.

I assure Hon. Members that my Department and I stand willing to offer information and assistance to any interested persons or groups on this specific matter.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) for whom I have the highest respect and esteem, particularly in terms of his courage and action with respect to controlling and banning pesticides where possible, has been given the impossible task of reading what I would describe as a non-statement.

Page 1 is simply a diary of social activities, inclusive of one mistake. The Fate of the Earth Conference does not open next week; it opened this week. Page 2 sets out toothless verbiage

which rambles endlessly. On Page 3 the absent Minister trots into the House the notion that education would be the substitute for Government action. Perhaps he does so in order to justify the \$1 million advertising campaign in a manner that creates the impression that advertising will substitute and solve the problem, when the onus is entirely on the Government and not on the advertising agencies. When it comes to day-to-day environmental issues the Tory logic seems to boil down to: "You, the citizens, do the job for us, the Government, while we spend your money on advertising and get the public relations benefits".

With respect to the message that Canadians were expecting, it seems to me that Canadians would prefer substance as opposed to this kind of stuff. They would like to know when the Government will act in putting crimes against the environment into the Criminal Code instead of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) pointing the finger at the culprits and the industries without taking any further action.

I suspect Canadians would like to see an equalization of the price of gasoline at the pump between leaded and unleaded gasoline. That will resolve the problem of misfueling, something the advertising campaign will not do. Canadians would like to see a launching of a real plan along the Niagara River, the one that was promised by the predecessor of the present Minister of the Environment for the clean-up there.

I suspect that the message Canadians would like to hear today would be one with respect to action in reinstating, for instance, the Guelph Toxicology Centre that was wiped out by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) in November of 1984, thus giving the toxic issue Government support and the scientific impact it deserves.

Canadians would like to see a reinstatement of the Canadian Wildlife Service. They would like to see a strengthening of the environmental protection services which have been weakened in the past two years by the Government. Canadians would like to see an assurance as to the growth and expansion of our national parks system by way of new sites and new facilities. The list is endless.

Since you are pointing to me that I should conclude, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by saying this. So far with respect to acid rain there has been no U.S. reduction from which we have been able to benefit. With respect to scientific research, there have been retreats and cuts. With respect to scientists in Environment Canada, there has been muzzling. On PCB research, which was promised by the predecessor of the present Minister of the Environment, in terms of the destruction and research, there has been no action at all. On the removal of lead from gasoline, the action has been delayed. I hate to conclude with these remarks but, nearing the end of Environment Week, the Government has shown that it is merely concerned with one thing, and that is public relations.