

[English]

HEALTH AND WELFARE

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Madam Speaker, rumours have been circulating for several months and today we have confirmation from the Minister of National Health and Welfare that \$4 million will be cut from the budget of the National Health Research and Development Program.

This program is the only source of research funding in Canada for public health, preventive medicine, health promotion, health education, and health services research.

I received copies of letters sent to the minister from disbelieving researchers who work in these fields. One such person works in environmental health studying the risk of cancer due to chemicals in the environment.

These researchers tell me that such a cut will have a devastating effect on their work. Some research teams will disband; new ones will be stillborn.

We hear every day about the need to control health-care costs in an ageing society. Cutting funding for research in preventive health and public health research is not the way to do it. It is sheer lunacy. I hope that the government will reconsider this ill-advised decision which is sure to be counter-productive.

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MEECH LAKE ACCORD

Mr. J.W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Madam Speaker, this week the fate of Canada's Constitution hangs in the balance. All reasonable Canadians share the aspirations and concerns of those who seek to advance the security of their respective rights and freedoms in our Constitution, be they men or women, French or English, aboriginals or of any ethnic origin.

In my view, opposition to the accord is not the way to achieve such goals. To the contrary, I believe that ratification of it is an absolutely essential prerequisite to advancing any cause for constitutional reform in Canada at this time.

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We must all recognize that from the very moment our Constitution was patriated in 1982 without Quebec's participation there has been virtual paralysis with respect to any change or future development.

The Meech Lake Accord is designed to cure that paralysis and to make it possible for other issues to move forward constructively and to be resolved.

The best way to build our nation for every interest is to affirm the Meech Lake Accord now. The worst way for any interest will be to block it.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Madam Speaker, the world, not just Canada, faces environmental catastrophes of a magnitude unknown to human existence.

Twenty thousand species will become extinct this year and half of all species on earth will become extinct over the next 50 years if we continue the human industrial assault.

Two acres of tropical rain forest are clearcut or go up in smoke every second. In Canada one acre is clearcut or burned every five seconds, every minute, every hour, every day of the year.

Our oceans are under assault. In recent days whales, seals, fish, even starfish by the millions, have been washing ashore dead from radiation in the White Sea north of Moscow. The hole in the ozone grows over the Arctic and now over Canada. Global warming continues despite the pleadings of scientists world-wide.

Today the environmental assessment and review legislation is to be tabled. It has long been promised. Consultations went on for a year back in 1987. In 1988 Tom McMillan promised on October 20, "We are prepared to subject every federal undertaking and every undertaking on federal lands to a thorough environmental impact study." Lucien Bouchard promised the same.

Since 1974 the EARP has been based upon a cabinet policy, solely an Order in Council.

Despite strong rulings by the Federal Court on the Rafferty-Alameda and a unanimous ruling by the Federal Court of Appeal on the Oldman Dam, both projects continue without completed assessments.