

*Supply*

one being environmental impact assessment, for example. It is a fact that there is no legislation in Manitoba which requires an environmental impact assessment of all projects. It is a policy decision on the part of the existing Government to have it in every case but it is not legislation, although it should be. It should not be left up to the discretion of Government, in my view.

The reason some other provinces received higher points in that particular area—the Ontario Government, for instance—was that they do have legislation. However, the legislation has all kinds of ministerial discretion, so that in Ontario, even though there is legislation, there are fewer environmental impact assessments done because the Ontario Minister of the Environment is constantly saying, “Well, in this case, we won’t have one”. But when you just have a kind of survey which asks if the provinces have legislation or not—and it is ticked off—then there will be a distorted view of just what kind of priorities exist in various provinces.

So I would recommend to the Hon. Member that he take a good look at the study and ask some questions about what kind of criteria are used in making judgments between provinces.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate.

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister has disappeared again. I hope she will come back.

**Mr. Benjamin:** She’s not the one we need. Mr. Mazankowski is responsible. He’s here.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** The Minister has not been in the House to face the music since the first day we brought this issue up in the House, Mr. Speaker. In its first few months in office, this Government—

**Mr. Caccia:** Here she is.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** That’s good.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Having respect for the right hon. gentleman, as I do, and having regard to his long tenure of service in the House of Commons, I think he would want to reconsider his opening comments.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** I do not at all, Mr. Speaker. Since we have raised this issue, particularly the PCB crisis, the Minister has been in the House once. She said it was a provincial responsibility and she has not returned until today’s debate. I am glad to see her in the House to deal with this particular issue. I say that having regard to my old friendship with the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski), and I want to record for *Hansard* the fact that I drew his usual benign smile at the end of my remarks.

In its few short months in office, this Government has turned the clock back on the cause of environmental protection by years and years. It is becoming crystal clear that there is no commitment on the part of this new Conservative Government

for the protection or enhancement of the environment. As I and members of this Party have pointed out to this Minister and this Government on the Opposition Day we sponsored on March 5—this is the second Opposition Day we have chosen to direct to this important environmental question—we saw the first indications of how this Government was going to treat environmental matters in the statement of the Minister of Finance on November 8. Apparently that is just the tip of the iceberg because back-bench Tory Members of Parliament have warned us in the House and outside that if we thought the November cuts in the environmental commitment were drastic, we should wait for the May Budget, there are going to be even more. The list of cuts in that November statement reads like the dictionary of disaster which we recited here in the House on March 5; closing or attempting to privatize wildlife interpretation centres; cutting service in the migratory bird sanctuaries in the west and elsewhere; delaying work on the Fraser River dyking project in British Columbia; and eliminating the toxology centre at Guelph which would have been the first of its kind to monitor and assess the impact of new chemicals.

[*Translation*]

And the Environment Secretariat, which was part of the National Research Council and was made up of scientists who could sound the alarm whenever the environment was jeopardized has been eliminated. These scientists used to keep us informed of the hazards associated with asbestos, phosphates, heavy metals, mercury, PCB and other pollutants.

The government has attacked the Canadian Wildlife Service. It has laid off 84 people, which is 25 p. cent of its total staff. Some of the best biologists and environment specialists in the world have been “cut” and are now working elsewhere, in the United States, Australia, Asia and Africa. The minister’s response is that, and I quote, these cuts will have no negative effect on the survival of the programs. It is like throwing a lead lifebuoy at a person who is about to drown.

The government then turned its attack on our national parks. In order to help Canadians celebrate the 100th anniversary of Parks Canada, it has reduced its services, doubled and tripled the admission fees and reduced the number of its employees. What a way to celebrate the anniversary of Parks Canada, which has a reputation for excellence throughout the world!

[*English*]

The Minister says that the provinces will pick up the slack in these programs which she is abandoning willy-nilly. She says, “Let the provinces do it. Let the private sector do it”. All I can say is that it is not likely, especially when we consider that Ontario alone has cut some \$29 million out of environmental programs in the past two or three years and the Treasurer of Ontario is campaigning on a promise to cut every Ministry even more. It is also unrealistic to expect private industry to do its own clean-up. The experience of the Hooker