

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Chair, along with the officers at the table, feel that there may be a problem with accepting this amendment as is. I would ask the House to please allow me to take it under advisement for a few minutes and then I will get back to the House.

I will now proceed to the period of question and comments.

Mr. Fulton: Madam Speaker, I know the hon. member is very much aware of the remarks of the Minister of the Environment this morning. We know that there are 39 bioregions in Canada and 21 of the bioregions are presently represented by the 34 national parks that we have. There are 18 bioregions that are still not represented, the majority of which are south of 60.

In the minister's response this morning on this motion, he indicated that there are four national parks and four different bioregions north of 60 that are under consideration. One happens to be in the member's own province, which is the Churchill proposal for Canada's first national park dedicated principally to the preservation of the polar bear.

That still leaves 13 bioregions unrepresented. The minister suggested this would be the Conservative government's master plan, they would complete these five, perhaps others, but five between now and 1995. This would leave 13 bioregions unrepresented and 26 marine biophysical regions unrepresented. Since only 54 per cent of the land areas have managed to obtain national park status since 1885 when the first national park was created, that being Banff, I wonder if the hon. member would, first; touch on the proposal vis-à-vis the province of Manitoba, that being the only one suggested south of 60 and second; whether or not that target and timetable is likely to achieve what is being suggested by the minister's own task force, where it was stated definitively that if we do not complete the national park system between now and the year 2000, it simply cannot be because of developmental pressures that are making it impossible.

I wonder if the member could take a moment to talk about how realistic the government's proposal is and what kind of forces might there be out there that the Prime Minister and the cabinet might be listening to

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instead of the 96 per cent of Canadians who, when polled, say they want the national park system completed.

Mr. Blaikie: Madam Speaker, it seems to me that the import of what the minister said with respect to his plan for only completing another four or five parks by 1995 is that he has basically written off the rest of the country that is eligible to have a national park and that has been designated as eligible in various plans produced by the government over the years.

• (1540)

There are various marine bioregions and the other eight or nine bioregions beyond the four or five already planned and these are to be written off. Why do we say that?

It is not as if the government has 150 years to do this. If it did, then it could say, "This is proceeding in an orderly fashion", as governments have said for the last 100 years. But we do not have that kind of time left, we have to do things in a hurry. We know that species disappear because of the effect of many environmental problems. The damage which is done to the ecosystems is not a gradual thing which happens, to use a mathematical analogy in a sort of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 sort of way. It happens in a 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, and 64 kind of way, exponentially. Perhaps the hon. member would think it useful if I recited a story which I think illustrates what we are talking about.

Imagine, Madam Speaker, that there is a pond which used to be covered by lily pads, starting out with one lily pad, in a period of 28 days. So you start with one lily pad, two lily pads, four lily pads, 8, 16, 32, 64. I am trying to make it understandable to members on the other side of the House. It proceeds in this way and on the twenty-eighth day the pond will be completely and totally covered. Ask yourself, Madam Speaker, what will be the situation in the pond on the twenty-seventh day? On the twenty-seventh day half the pond will be uncovered. On the twenty-seventh day it would be possible for those who do not understand the situation to be sitting on a lily pad somewhere and saying to those who are saying "You'd better get out of here fella, the pond is going to be covered very, very soon". It is very possible for others to be sitting there saying "What are you worrying about, what's the rush? We have half the pond left". What happens on the twenty-eighth day, Madam Speaker?