

*Supply*

**Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to have this opportunity, on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Okanagan—Shuswap, to respond to the motion before the House.

The new constituency of Okanagan—Shuswap is located at the north end of the Okanagan Valley, in the southern interior of British Columbia. The riding includes the Shuswap and Okanagan Lakes water basins. It enjoys a thriving tourism industry which complements both the forestry and agricultural industries.

Without a doubt it is probably one of the finest pieces of real estate on the globe. It has a quality of life that is virtually unsurpassed. The people of the riding of Okanagan—Shuswap are very proud of that environmental heritage. They are becoming increasingly concerned with what they see at a local, provincial, national, and global level as a threat to their quality of life and the quality of life of all Canadians: the accelerating loss of our forests, the strangling of our agricultural industry, and threats to our limited supply of fresh, clean water.

Although my constituents in general applaud the Government's new-found commitment to environmental issues, they are also as suspicious as I am that those promises on the environmental initiatives will evaporate as quickly as have hundreds of other promises.

It is true that the Government is preparing to spend more money on the Ministry of the Environment. The Government is also spending hundreds of millions of dollars more on energy megaprojects that will harm our environment. While it has increased spending in the ministry, it has cancelled what amounts to approximately \$1.6 billion worth of election promises on environmental issues. I wish to list a few of them. Energy conservation, research and development, \$600 million; measures against acid rain, \$300 million; the Halifax Harbour clean-up; the Great Lakes clean-up, and the list goes on.

While more is being spent in the ministry, a recent article in one of the local papers indicates that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bouchard) is spending more than \$40,000 alone on his own environment on improvements to his office at the same time that billions of dollars worth of environmental commitments made by the Government during the election are being cancelled.

One of the most disturbing memories that I can recall as a child is the recurring question of just where did all the steel, rubber, and other materials come from to build our way of life and our nation? What about all the energy to supply and heat our homes, and the gasoline to run our automobiles? I always used to question where it all came from, and what will happen when we finally run out. In more modern terms, it could be phrased as just what are our limits to growth?

In the early 1950s the term "pollution" was not widely recognized or understood. The concept of resource depletion was virtually unheard of. Our approach to nature was to beat it into submission. Mother Nature was to be conquered by man's technological superiority.

Industrialized nations with booming post-war economies were caught in an economic frenzy, building a better life for their citizens and consuming more and more of our non-renewable resources.

The 1950s were the golden years of the industrialized world. There was a standard of living that was unmatched in all of previous human history. The "good life" at last was within our reach. Big cars, big egos, fast times. The measure of success was a '57 Chevy and a full tank of gas.

Then things began to change. We were now beginning to bump up against some very harsh realities. It was during the 1960s that the first faint cries of environmental concerns were heard. Rachel Carson's book entitled *Silent Spring* outlined the consequences of our environmental neglect. It provided the focus needed for the environmental movement. At that time, that movement was considered a collection of academic eccentrics and back-to-nature freaks that no one paid a lot of attention to. We are now beginning to take them very seriously.

Later works such as *Limits to Growth*, published by the Club of Rome in the early 1970s, raised legitimate concerns that the world we lived in was heading straight toward a catastrophic collapse both economically and environmentally, which at that time they considered may have already been too late to avoid. Today, almost a quarter century after these first alarms were sounded, the industrialized world continues to lurch from crisis to crisis, not understanding that as a delicately balanced system, our environment is in fact getting more and more out of whack.