

The former Minister of the Environment said, in 1985, that the pollution situation in the St. Clair River was awesome. That is what he said, "awesome", but actions speak louder than words. Commitment means more than public relations.

In the example of the Lake Huron pipeline project, the Government showed to everyone that it was not committed and would not act to ensure a cleaner source of drinking water for communities. I mentioned that a decision was made last week. It was a decision that took over a year for this Government to make. All along it expressed its commitment and concern for residents downstream from Chemical Valley. ERDA was mentioned as a door to be opened but last week, the Minister of the Environment slammed that door shut.

Economic Regional Development Agreements across Canada were being sized down. Some were not being renewed. Yet, in September 1987, the former Minister said in a letter that he "would be prepared to support an ERDA proposal if it reached the federal level." A base document was prepared for a subagreement. The Province of Ontario outlined in graphic detail how the economy of the region would be affected by a prolonged shutdown of the water intake plants. The federal Government received it in April 1988 and left the residents of my riding hanging for an answer until last week. That does not show commitment. There are ERDAs in other provinces, for example, water supply projects in Saskatchewan and in British Columbia. Even the Minister of the Environment himself is getting a road built in his own riding. I guess that is not municipal infrastructure.

As I said before, the Lake Huron pipeline project is a symbol of the Government's unfairness. It is a symbol of the Government's inaction on environmental issues. It led local residents down the garden path with the hope that there was more money available. However, the Tories said: "It's not our problem". The Town of Dresden is facing serious problems with the quality of drinking water. This Government has done nothing to help solve the crisis by helping to build a pipeline.

### *Supply*

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The nitrate levels in Dresden's water source were beyond acceptable levels. This was as of March 30, 1989. A drinking water alert was issued on April 6. Yet the Government still refuses to admit that there is a problem and refuses to help us.

As well, I have another example of the Government's words not matching a funding commitment. The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) visited my riding himself during the last election with \$3 million for what he called "the Sydenham River pollution solution". It was announced with great fanfare. The feds would spend \$3 million if the province did, too.

I quote from the news release of October 20, 1988:

The federal Government is taking action to remedy pollution from agricultural pesticides that are showing up in the water supply of residents in southern Ontario's Sydenham River Basin—in particular, Dresden.

In announcing the five-year, \$6 million program, the Minister of Agriculture said it would improve cropping and land-use practices to help correct the water pollution problem.

The news release continues:

The Sydenham River project will involve field studies to identify the sources of agricultural pesticides found in the water supply. Soil studies will determine chemical movement. The program will also monitor chemical movement through drainage systems, streams and waterways, and study rainfall patterns and intensity.

I said during the election campaign locally that this was an excellent program, and one well worth the money. It showed that the Conservatives were indeed concerned about the environment and had some money to prove it. However, I have looked into the matter a little more closely. I called bureaucrats and other officials. At that time I was chairman of the Water Board for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. I have more than a passing interest in this project.

It was only an election promise. There was no money. The federal Government is blaming the province for holding it up because it wants new, matching funds, in addition to the great sums of money the Government of Ontario is already spending there.

Since the Sydenham project will not go ahead without Ontario's money up front, there is no project. It is a shame. The federal Government will not spend its \$3 million and go it alone so the project is dead.