

Supply

It is the same kind of doubletalk that we have heard with respect to the issue of water pollution and air pollution. We have heard the Minister say in response to the Member from the Okanagan that in fact he is going to be bringing in new legislation to clean up water. As the result of this Government's inability or unwillingness to lay charges on regulations that already exist with respect to pulp and paper mills in this country, we are in a ridiculous situation where, for example, there is a town in New Brunswick where they cannot even drink their water at the moment. They must use bottled water because their water has been totally polluted by the discharge from a pulp and paper company.

The Minister currently has the authority to go in and lay charges and make sure that his own regulations are being applied with respect to pulp and paper discharge. Yet he seems unwilling and unable to even apply his own laws. I wrote a letter a few days ago to the Prime Minister stating that the Minister promised to meet with the Mirimachi Environment Society specifically on the issue of the water which is currently undrinkable. The people in that community are actually drinking bottled water. The Minister said he would be willing to meet with them, and yet for some reason has been unwilling and unable to do so.

If you do not want to believe the statements of the Liberal Party, look at the Friends of the Earth. Look at the assessment that was done by Greenpeace in the spring of 1989 in which they examined the discharge record of the major pulp and paper discharge mills across Canada. The mills with the highest discharge in Canada in terms of passing and failing on discharge were: Crown Forest Products, fail, B.C. Forest Products, fail, CIP Forest Products, fail, Consolidated Bathurst Forest Products, fail, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Company, fail. The record of the pulp and paper industry in cleaning up their own discharge is abysmal. The Minister has the tools in hand already. He has the tools available to lay charges. He does not need a new law. He does not need to reinvent the wheel. He has regulations at his disposal already which are not being applied.

The Minister himself has indicated that he is willing to move in and charge Consolidated Bathurst specifically with relation to a PCB spill. The people of Canada are

counting on him for more than that. They are counting on him to lay charges.

When a community such as this community in New Brunswick is placed in a situation where they cannot even drink their own water, then we have a Minister of the Environment who is not doing his job. The Minister says he is going to clean up the water. If that is the case, why does the Budget include not increases, but cuts in the infrastructure for treating raw sewage?

Just a week ago, I was in Halifax. I had the displeasure of going on what is called the sewer tour. The discharge that comes out of every toilet in the Cities of Halifax and Dartmouth is currently going straight into the Atlantic Ocean. Instead of the federal Government following on a Liberal commitment to have a municipal infrastructure program that permits communities across this country to deal with their own waste, the Minister's own Budget shows cuts.

I refer specifically to the cuts that I have identified over the last five years. The Minister blames it on some past administration back in 1984. I would like to set the record straight because I think this nonsense about an increase in the environmental Budget absolutely presupposes that the Canadian people are either stupid or myopic. In looking at the Budget, you have to look at what would have been spent under estimates and what has been cut cumulatively over the last five-year period.

I would like to put some figures on the record. The Minister talks about his commitment in global terms. I have not heard the specifics. In 1984-85 and 1985-86, the cumulative cuts, including inflation as well as specific cuts, amounted to a loss of \$82,147,000 in the environmental budget. In 1986-87, the cumulative cuts, if you take into consideration the purchasing power of inflation as well as the specific Budget cuts, amounted to a total cut of \$178 million. In 1987-88, the situation was compounded. The over-all cut from what had been proposed and what would have been spent under a Liberal administration to what was spent under this Government was a \$286 million cut. In 1988-89, a cumulative loss in the spending power of the Department and the Ministry of Environment in so far as research and all areas are concerned was \$404 million. Admittedly the Minister has said that this particular budget represents a 9 per cent increase over last year.