

*Supply*

This being said, let me add that indeed it is not good enough to clean-up one part of the St. Lawrence—we must depollute it overall. It is not good enough to clean-up the St. Lawrence River, we should also be concerned with the Great Lakes. One of the facets of the program we announced today would ensure that we can identify the contribution of Great Lake pollution to the pollution of the River.

Furthermore, we as a Government have provided for the establishment of a Great Lakes clean-up plan, which has already been operational for some time; it is now entering Phase II and will be significantly strengthened over the coming months, when we announce corrective plans for specific situations, the 17 hot spots on the shores of Lake Ontario in particular. But let me repeat my promise to provide the Hon. Member with the information he requested.

[English]

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Mr. Speaker, this motion is very clear. It makes very practical suggestions. They are most desirable at a time when talk about sustainable development is still wrapped in a lot of rhetoric and vague thoughts. I support it. I regret that the Government does not see fit to do so.

In particular, the portion of the motion that is particularly commendable is the creation of a parliamentary commissioner for the environment. That is an excellent proposal.

New Zealand created such a commissioner just recently, as you know, in 1986. We seek your support to make this idea become a reality for the benefit of parliamentarians and of Canadians at large.

In making contributions to environmentally sustainable development, as the motion reads, and actually attain an environmentally sustainable future, we have to examine the structure of Government and the mandate of its Departments. We have to examine its energy policies and incentives to develop the technology to come closer to zero rather than minimum discharge. We have to look at its lack of ecological tax reform in the present tax system. We have to look at the weak enforcement and compliance of environmental laws. We

have to look at how we have managed until now and are running the risk now to change in the approach to our forestry, fisheries, soil and water.

Mr. Speaker, I will briefly go over some of these facets of an environmentally sustainable policy then propose amendments at the end.

It seems to me that it can be said, as has been stressed in *Our Common Future*, the report of the World Commission on the Environment and Development, that an environmentally sustainable future can hardly be achieved if the present mandate of government Departments remains unchanged, because it relegates their responsibility for the environment to one Department, that of the Environment. Regardless of the sincerity and compassion of the Minister of the Environment—and this one has a lot of both—he does not have the legislative mandate to override critical policy recommendations or decisions that are not environmentally sustainable but which are proposed by his colleagues in Cabinet every week, almost every day.

In fact, when he appeared before the Environment Committee a few weeks ago, the Minister himself admitted that while federal projects will be reviewed for environmental impact, what will not be reviewed are policies and programs. Even this afternoon, he confirmed that a Budget cannot be examined from an environmental point of view. I disagree with him. I apologize if I am somehow interrupting his dialogue with colleagues, but I think it is important for this very keen Minister of the Environment to disagree with his own Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) as to the untouchability and independence of the Minister of Finance to come forward with a Budget that may be counterproductive in ecological terms instead of producing one that contains what one could describe as ecological tax reform.

It would help him, as Minister of the Environment, to introduce incentives that he needs, for instance, to improve the quality of water or to remove existing disincentives from the tax system. In effect, he will then have achieved what is the ultimate desire and passion of any Minister of the Environment, which is to transform the Minister of Finance into an environmentalist. That is not bad for anybody.