

Supply

Mr. Speaker, where did that debt originate? It originated in spending, not in the Department of Environment but everywhere! The previous Government had been throwing money around for 20 years and that spending did not necessarily benefit the country. But it is responsible for this country today being overburdened with debt, so specific measures must be taken to eventually, in the near future bring the national debt, the annual deficit under control, as well as the debt service charges.

Mr. Speaker, when you have to spend 35 cents out of every dollar earned on interest payments on your debt, without repaying that debt itself, certainly you are in big trouble. But this is the situation this Government and this country find themselves in, because of the debt situation we inherited. Like it or not, this is the inheritance we were elected to manage, and this is what we are doing, Mr. Speaker!

• (1530)

Let me review rapidly the election promises made by the NDP on environment matters. I will not go into all their promises, Mr. Speaker, because I would still be here tomorrow morning.

They referred to a Water Act. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Environment Minister (Mr. L. Bouchard) and his Department are presently working on that. They promised they would ban water exports. Mr. Speaker, in 1987, that is a year and a half ago, we stated we would not export water!

They said they would give money to help build water treatment plants. In November 1987, Mr. Speaker, we did that.

They promised \$120 million more per year for the Department of Environment. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the 9.4 per cent increase, but I did not mention an increase of some \$800 million per year earmarked by other departments for environment purposes, including the Department of Research and Development and the Department of Science and Technology. So, a number of other departments also spend money for the environment, a total of about \$800 million. I think we can forget about this NDP promise.

Finally, they proposed to amend the Criminal Code so that polluters would be prosecuted. Mr. Speaker, this provision exists already. There is a provision in the Criminal Code to the effect that all those who break a

law, whether in the area of environment or elsewhere, can be prosecuted.

As you can see, we have already fulfilled in part or are in the process of fulfilling the promises which the NDP made during the election campaign. For us, these promises are facts and realities.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I feel I must suggest to the NDP Leader that the next time there is an Opposition Day on which the House will have to deal for a whole day with a similar motion, he should move a motion which would emphasize facts and raise definite issues, Mr. Speaker, nothing similar to this motion which states:

That this House condemns the Government for failing to ensure fairness and equality to all Canadians, and for failing to make protection of the environment a priority.

With a motion such as this, Mr. Speaker, what can the Members of this House do? How could this Government reply objectively and try to help the Opposition understand, because sometimes they have a hard time understanding? How can we deal with such a motion—not even four lines, Mr. Speaker, only three lines and a half—which says nothing?

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the NDP Leader should do some soul-searching and make sure that the next time we have an Opposition Day, we will have a more interesting issue to address.

[*English*]

Mr. Funk: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for his speech and congratulate him on his interest in the environment. As the Minister mentioned this morning, I wish him luck in turning this Commons green. That caucus is so blue that I would be surprised if they got to turquoise in their efforts.

I wish to speak on the environment from a Saskatchewan perspective. It took a court decision to order the Government of Canada to do an environmental impact assessment on the Rafferty—Alameda dam. The court essentially told the Government to protect the environment, not the PC Party. We heard yesterday in the House that soil conservation agreements which are badly needed because the dust is blowing again in Saskatchewan have been held up for several years. In my own constituency of Prince Albert—Churchill River, friends of the Conservative Party are promoting a free enterprise nuclear reactor. They are going around to the Indian bands saying that there is limitless federal money available for them to invest in this free enterprise reactor.