

S. O. 31

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 31

[Translation]

VIA RAIL

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S POSITION

Mr. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Jonquière): Mr. Speaker, over the weekend the Leader of the New Democratic Party took part in a march to save VIA Rail from the cuts imposed by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson).

I wonder at times, Mr. Speaker, whether the Leader of the New Democratic Party is aware of Canadian realities or whether he is trying to follow into the footsteps of Christopher Columbus and discover America anew! He doesn't know where he is going, he does not know where he is coming from, and all that at the expense of the taxpayers.

Does the Leader of the New Democratic Party realize, Mr. Speaker, that each time a Canadian boards a train, there is a \$100 cost to the Government? Does the Leader of the New Democratic Party realize those \$100 must be paid by average citizens each time someone boards a train?

Mr. Speaker, we cannot go on spending left and right! If we are to preserve our social programs, we absolutely must reduce the deficit and better control our expenditures.

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[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, the International Chamber of Commerce Award to the Prime Minister prompted Fitzhugh Green, the former Deputy Head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to say:

It's like the devil giving an award for purity.

While the Prime Minister receives accolades abroad, at home through the Budget, he closes 12 conservation and renewable energy offices, phases out the National Conservation and Alternative Energy Initiative Program, cuts transfer payments to the provinces by \$340 million, possibly affecting reforestation programs and other environmental joint ventures and cuts another \$396 million from overseas development assistance, which may affect environmental programs. At the same time, there is not one word in the Budget about the \$5 billion in subsidies

committed to fossil fuel megaprojects which will aggravate global warming, an issue the Prime Minister claims to be concerned about.

When will the Prime Minister practice as he preaches? When will he take action to back up his words? When will he open the centre on sustainable development he promised last year at the United Nations General Assembly?

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FORESTRY

NATIONAL FOREST WEEK

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, this week we are celebrating the 60th Annual National Forest Week. All across our country Canadians are reflecting on the importance of the forests to our livelihood, our environment, and indeed our planet. The release last Friday of the Woodbridge Reed Report, showing the tremendous economic potential of the forest industry, shows as well the increased demand for a shrinking wood supply. This is part of the mounting evidence that demonstrates that all levels of government, industry and labour, and many of the scientists that parliamentarians met this afternoon and later today, must work together to make sure our forests provide the same opportunities for Canadians in the future as they are providing for us in the present. The federal Government should immediately begin negotiating forestry agreements with the provinces, and they should mark this Forest Week with the introduction of legislation to establish formally the Department of Forests.

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AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

ELIGIBILITY OF SENIOR FIREFIGHTERS TO AWARD

Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham): Mr. Speaker, the firefighters of Canada are brave and dedicated individuals who risk their lives daily to save the lives and property of Canadians. There is a medal to recognize this devotion to duty. It is called the Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal, and is awarded to veterans on retirement who have given 20 years service of good standard. The Chancellor of Canadian Orders and Declarations decided however that only those veterans who retired after August 28, 1985, would be eligible. Firefighters who struggled with old and inadequate equipment during World War II were no less brave and dedicated. A few of