

Government Orders

Ms. Hunter: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would be only too pleased to give the environmental network's assessment of this bill.

I had the pleasure of having dinner with a number of the group members who looked at this legislation. They are not very happy with it. In fact they are the ones who are pushing us to stop it. It is so fatally flawed that they want it out of here. They realize that the government is trying to push through this legislation in order to satisfy its short-term view, and also it is the old smoke and mirrors routine.

In the Canadian environmental network good, sound environmentalists that they are, are well aware of what the government is doing. I think the best thing for the government to do is to withdraw this bill and have it redrafted considerably.

Mr. René Soetens (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to ask the member a question. In environmental matters generally the people are concerned about the air we breathe, the land on which we live, the water we drink, those kinds of issues. She referenced a whole bunch of other things like whether union employees should make \$18 an hour as one of the things we ought to look into. Then she talked about the Environmental Assessment Act of Ontario being such a good bill as an example. I realize it was brought in by a Conservative government many years ago in Ontario. For five years the Liberals tried to use it and did not, and now the NDP in Ontario has its chance.

Could the member tell me of one hearing, of one successful hearing, of one ruling, of one decision that has been made under an Environmental Assessment Act hearing in Ontario if she thinks it is that good? I can tell her there is none, but maybe she would like to comment.

Ms. Hunter: Mr. Speaker, yes, I would be pleased to comment. I think it enabled me to point out another flaw in this legislation. There has to be enabling legislation to make it enforceable. That is what we are talking: enforceability.

Sure, we can wheedle, we can plead, and we can suggest but really what we need to have is laws, enforceable laws, laws that people know will be enforced and that there will be fines or imprisonment for degrading our environment.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Since this is the end of my second week in my new job as Acting Speaker, I want to thank those of you who have given me their best wishes and offered me their cooperation. I will try to live up to your expectations.

[*English*]

It being six o'clock, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at eleven o'clock a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.