

• (1905)

Third, the definition of toxicity. It is based on the Environment Protection Act definition which states that the substance is toxic if it is present in the environment and in a quantity or concentration that may have a harmful effect on the environment or may cause an endangerment to human health.

Why not then adopt a definition of toxicity that does not have thresholds so high that the scope and effectiveness of the policy is thwarted? For example the policy proposed by the government is intended to apply to all substances used and released into the environment. Is this definition broad enough? Should it not include threats posed to human health on sites where these substances are used prior to the release of the substance into the environment?

Fourth, the concern that for a substance to be considered toxic it must meet certain threshold levels in three different criteria; persistence, bioaccumulation and toxicity. For some reason the proposed policy contains threshold levels that are often higher, less stringent than those proposed by the Ontario government, the priority substance list of the Environment Protection Act. Should we not ensure that we have stringent threshold levels to ensure the safety of human health and the environment?

To conclude, the success or failure of the proposed toxics policy rests on definitions and criteria. If they are too weak then the rest of the policy will be ineffective.

My question to the minister is will the proposed definitions and levels be re-examined and brought up to levels required to protect all life in the long term?

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member for Davenport I would mention that a toxic substances management policy was released on September 27 and given a period of 60 days for consultation and comments from the public and other interested bodies.

This period is going to end on November 30, 1994. Obviously among the comments I expect to be received include the key questions raised by the hon. member such as what really constitutes pollution prevention. Today the minister alluded to pollution prevention in a statement in the House as part of the very basis of our objective in trying to pursue environmental and sustainable development goals.

The question of pollution prevention, the definition of toxicity, the whole concept of reverse onus, the whole question of levels raised by the hon. member are obviously going to come up. These concepts or ideas require co-ordination with existing instruments, as rightly underlined by the member, with CEPA and with the other policies and programs of government.

### *Adjournment Debate*

What I strongly suggest to the hon. member is given the high regard in which he is held by all his colleagues in regard to environmental questions, including by the minister herself, is that he provide his input into the consultation process on these very issues that are so crucial to a reliable toxic substances policy.

I would suggest to the hon. member that between now and November 30 he let the minister have his thoughts and I can assure him they will be taken with very serious and constructive consideration.

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Ron Fewchuk (Selkirk—Red River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on October 19 I rose in the House to ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs what leadership role Canada would undertake to restore the Ukrainian economy after decades of economic and environmental mismanagement under the former Soviet regime.

I was very pleased to hear the minister indicate to this House that last July in Naples the G-7 countries endorsed the proposal of the Prime Minister to host a conference on economic reform in Ukraine.

As a Manitoban and a Canadian of Ukrainian descent I am very proud that the economic conference will take place in Winnipeg on October 27. The meeting will be attended by officials from the G-7 countries.

I understand that a proposal at this meeting is to discuss Ukraine's plan for economic reform and international support for Ukraine's economic transformation. I know that it is important that Canada and the G-7 countries encourage Ukraine to implement an economic reform program in co-operation with international financial institutions.

I was very pleased to hear that Canada is totally committed to Ukraine and has committed over \$41 million to over 70 projects. It has been brought to my attention that Canada will further pledge up to \$20 million in aid to help Ukraine transfer its economy to a western style market system.

I strongly believe that these projects are an investment in the future of Ukraine and an investment for Canada. These projects will be beneficial for all parties involved. This will open up a whole new market for Canadian businesses. Presently Canada and the United States are the only countries which have pledged their assistance.

During the Winnipeg meeting officials are expected to encourage the G-7 countries to pledge aid. I would very much like to get clarification on exactly how Canada is investing in the future and fostering better ties with Ukraine.

I am also very concerned about the environmental mismanagement that occurred under the former Soviet regime. Therefore I would like to know exactly what is going to be done concerning the environmental cleanup and the prevention of further pollutants being released into our environment.