

Private Members' Business

If a province is allowed to export its waste to the United States there would be less likelihood of two things happening. One is the development of an appropriate disposal or neutralizing facility in that particular region. The other and more important one is that without being forced to deal with the end product within that jurisdiction, that jurisdiction is less likely to force the creator to change the manner in which that particular good is manufactured or created so that it does not have hazardous waste as a by-product. For those two reasons I support this motion.

I also believe even within jurisdictions there should be a restriction that, for example, if an area of a province does not either have within its location the producer of the hazardous waste or benefits from the production that brings about the hazardous waste, it should not have to bear the responsibility for the storage or disposal of such material.

I am speaking specifically about the province of Ontario, and I am thinking specifically about high level nuclear waste. We all know that AECL has had a program for 10 to 12 years now of looking for an underground storage facility for nuclear waste that is created in southern Ontario by Ontario Hydro. It has been looking and drilling in northern Ontario. It has been drilling in the community of Atikokan in order to test the theory that granite is an appropriate medium in which to store for long periods of time, millenniums, high level nuclear waste.

Northern Ontario does not benefit from the nuclear reactor program that Ontario Hydro launched many years ago. In fact, residents of northern Ontario, like the residents of southern Ontario, are now finding there was a high price tag for those nuclear reactors. That price tag forced Ontario Hydro to increase its rates by over 11 per cent this year, 9 per cent next year, and who knows what thereafter, in order to pay for those mega-elephants. We still do not know what it is going to cost to de-commission them. We still do not know if we have the technology to not only handle the high level waste but also to handle the buildings and what have you.

A number of chemicals are created within our borders. There are a number of products which when released into the atmosphere or placed on the ground will destroy vegetation, animal life and human life. Those are the kinds of things we are talking about in terms of the

private member's motion, the banning of importation of all hazardous wastes.

We should accept responsibility for what we produce, but I think it is the responsibility of our neighbours to the south to look after what they produce.

I visited Love Canal a number of years ago, in 1985 in fact, with the Canada-U.S. parliamentary association. We toured what once was a city, a city the size of Atikokan, Ontario in fact, that was closed because of the dumping of toxic wastes. We walked along the Niagara Gorge, along the Niagara River and saw the chemicals seeping out, in fact dripping from the walls as they leached through the ecosystem.

I have seen in other cases where hazardous goods are illegally transported between Canada and the United States. Not only are they illegally transported but they are hidden in trucks with other cargoes. The placarding has been removed from the tankers carrying toxic waste in order that the cargo goes across the border from the United States into Canada undetected. That is happening and is happening today. One of the ways we can deal with that is just by saying no to the importation of hazardous goods.

It works both ways. The province of Ontario should stop the exportation of garbage to the United States for a profit. That is our responsibility. At the same time we should not be exporting garbage from Toronto to Kirkland Lake or any of the other northern communities. He or she who produces the garbage should be responsible for it.

In this brief intervention I just wanted to give a quick outline of why I am supporting the member's motion. I would encourage all members of the House to do so as well.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the motion moved by the hon. member for Hamilton East:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should ban the importation of all hazardous waste.

I wholeheartedly agree with this motion and certainly commend my colleague for bringing it before the House at this time.

We can look at the increased incidence of cancer in the Great Lakes basin, the continuation of industrial spills in the Great Lakes waters and our rivers. We can look at the thinning of the ozone and its impact on animal life in the southern extremities of South America, let alone