

Private Members' Business

The C. D. Howe Institute, in its July publication, talked about the need for good information and cost benefit analysis for decision making to integrate economic and environmental considerations.

We had the *Eco Source* magazine in August, 1990, calling "the environmental audit the road map to a greener corporation". For the largest corporations in the country, environmental audit is fast becoming a senior management issue and that "companies are realizing they have to factor the environment into business operations. You'd have to be dumb to be in business in North America today and not be taking on these issues."

The certified general accountants' magazine similarly described the importance of environmental audit as an idea whose time has come. It stated that the "International Chamber of Commerce and various industry associations in Canada are exploring how they can best assist their members in the use of environmental audits."

Finally, in October, 1990, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, with the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Finance both present and not dissenting, recommended to government that an environmental auditor should be named. I emphasize again, Mr. Speaker, both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of the Environment were present at that meeting when that recommendation was adopted.

• (1710)

The Rawson Academy on Aquatic Sciences, when it was before the environment committee on Bill C-78 on November 8 of this year, talked in very serious terms about the need for environmental audit, pointing out that such an office would be responsible for monitoring the performance of government agencies and departments according to designated standards of environmental protection or resource conservation.

Most of the sources I have quoted have been within the last year. There is an obvious ground swell of support for the recognition that, to truly integrate environmental decision making and economic decision making, environmental audit is an essential tool.

I will refer to only one last source and that is the interim report of the Standing Committee on Environment. The report is entitled: *No time to Lose—The*

Challenge of Global Warming. Recommendation 16 states that "the committee recommends that the Auditor General, working in conjunction with the Departments of Environment and Finance, establish an environmental audit function to ensure that all federal departments and agencies have implemented environmental assessment processes and to monitor the effectiveness of environmental programs".

Recommendation 17 states that "the committee recommends that all federal departments and agencies, as part of their budget submissions, report on the direct and indirect impacts of their operations on global warming and set annual targets for reductions".

These things cannot happen without the tools to let them happen. As the single-largest employer in the country, government must set the example. The green task force on the Hill, the Greening of the Hill, has been a symbol and a beacon to Canadians that we, as parliamentarians, are serious about our concerns for the environment and are determined to examine our own environment and to make it as friendly towards the survival of life on this planet as we possibly can. Canadians expect the same thing throughout government.

We cannot sit here and decide that we will impose regulations, laws, green taxes, and horrendous reporting requirements on everybody else in the country, and then exempt ourselves from what we require others to do at some cost to them.

However, I do want to point out that a number of sources have told us that what we are looking at here in environmental audit is not an expense, but a significant opportunity for cost-savings. I will give just one indicator. The DPA report estimated that in energy conservation alone, this country could save \$150 billion.

Again, I quote from *Eco Source* magazine. "The new audit is a matter of performance. It examines the environmental details not normally of concern to engineers and lawyers, such as the lighting system, the heating system, recycling practices, purchasing habits, packaging systems, supplier and investment policies. The auditors check washrooms and cafeterias, interview groundskeepers and cleaning staff, and discuss packaging alternatives, employee car poolings, staff training programs, and codes of conduct."