

Adjournment Debate

Finally, there are the employees, who have no leeway whatsoever to make up for the loss that they fall prey to in the case of a bankruptcy when we decide, under the present act, that they will have to pay. They have no way out.

I will put forward a principle that has not been proposed yet, the principle of the most vulnerable. Who is the most vulnerable? A quick analysis shows that in a case of bankruptcy, it is obviously the workers, who foot the bill, and not only directly, since they will not receive any salary and wages and they will have incurred expenses during that period. I am talking about expenses in terms of transportation, meals, clothing and even housing in some cases. And then they find out one, two, three or four weeks later that they will not get any wages, they will not be able to provide a decent living for their family for that period. Moreover, they will have spent money to go to work for an employer who is not able to pay them, which is contrary to the intent of our legislation where a service is provided for a salary.

• (1900)

They say that from now on, banks would be very reluctant to loan money. I take this opportunity to invite people to read the report the industry committee has just tabled. It mentions that the Small Businesses Loans Act will be broadened to include exporting businesses. The Bloc Québécois made a special recommendation to the effect that the Small Businesses Loans Act should apply to all businesses with respect to loans and working capital. If our recommendation were to be accepted, it would make banks feel more secure when things go sour, since the loans would be guaranteed by the government, which would lessen their losses.

I take this opportunity to say that this is an excellent piece of legislation and that, contrary to those who would like to narrow its scope, I, for one, claim that if we were to review this act which guarantees bank loans, we should make a cost-benefit analysis, taking into account the jobs it creates, the taxes it generates, and the savings in unemployment insurance and welfare it represents.

Once again, I congratulate my colleague. Mr. Speaker, I am quite sure that you would like to know that the sovereign Quebec of tomorrow will be a little bit like this. It will respect individuals who are the driving force of any activity, be it economic or otherwise.

[English]

The Speaker: My colleagues, the time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 3 I asked the Minister of the Environment a question about the toxic substances policy she announced on September 27. I asked her when the measures on pesticides would be implemented and what the timeframe for the policy was.

The minister replied that she had the intention of introducing implementing legislation in the early spring. Some suggestions might therefore be in place here tonight.

The goals of this toxic policy are as follows. First, to virtually eliminate from the environment substances that are the result of human activity, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic. Second, to ensure that all other substances of concern are adequately managed throughout their use so that there is minimum impact on the environment and human health.

Those substances which are persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic are to be virtually eliminated from the environment through a management program that ensures "no measurable release" of each substance. However, when it comes to substances which cannot be controlled, measures will be taken to prevent their generation and use. The onus will be on industry to demonstrate that the proposed management program will ensure that there is no measurable release of the substances into the environment.

The first point that I need to make here tonight is that if we are to have a sound toxic policy in Canada we must ensure that it is based on sound concepts. Clearly pollution prevention is at the crux of this policy. Is it adequate to say that pollution prevention is the control of the release of toxic substances rather than the reduction in their generation and use? Will control of release be adequate to protect human health and the environment?

Second, the term reverse onus is used throughout the discussion paper. Reverse onus is actually intended to mean that no production or use of substances is allowed until it is proven that these substances are not toxic. This burden is intended to fall upon industry and not on the government. Therefore I would suggest the proposed reverse onus should be expended so as to apply to proving the safety of the substances first and then to the management plans.