

S. O. 29

responsible for wildlife may do to assist Canada in the development of a master plan. It will take a great deal of work and money. There is nothing very sexy about someone in a white fur coat being shot on the street and thrown over a pack horse to demonstrate that this is what happens to the animal. It has a great deal of shock and audience appeal in the context of shock.

We must take a lesson from such people as Allan Herscovici and *Second Nature*, a very excellent text. The public would be well served to take the opportunity to read some of the statements that he has provided.

I would like to conclude with a brief remark made by Mr. Herscovici who said: "The root of our ecological crisis lies in technology, urbanism, and wealth. Animal rights groups, however, have to date attacked those who live closest to the land, who are poorest, and who have remained relatively aloof from mass technological society". Let us come up with a master plan.

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I hope that we can have order in this debate. It is a very serious debate. We are not only attempting to address Canadians or our colleagues in the House, but we are seeking to get a message to Britain. We hope that Members of the British Parliament will have an opportunity to read these *Debates*, or we could send them a video tape in order that they could receive the message from all of Canada on our concerns in terms of the motion before their House.

I wish to begin by reading from a letter with the letterhead of "10 Downing Street". The person who signed the letter is the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. She indicates in the letter that this matter "is still the subject of consultation". While she understands that we have concerns in this country, she states that "we must also take account of the widespread public concern here in the U.K. about the use of leg-hold traps. There is strong pressure for a ban on the import of furs . . .", and the letter continues.

The proposition that I wish to put before this House is that the action that Britain is considering is presently at the stage of study and consultation. Prime Minister Thatcher refers to that and refers to coming to a final decision. The counsel that I would like to give to the British Prime Minister is for more study and consultation. She ought to reflect upon this matter in full before coming to a decision. She ought not to make a decision on this matter on the basis of widespread public concern or strong pressure. She ought to be looking at the merits of the case. While she says in the letter "there is strong pressure for a ban on the import of furs", and that the United Kingdom is being pushed to have a ban, she later states that the U.K. is being nice because it will label the products instead, and that this is a minimal response.

We do not want to be fobbed off with a minimal response, which leaves us with a sense of guilt that we are doing something wrong and the British Parliament is being nice to

us. We would like them to take the time to study this issue and come to a moral conclusion. In other words, if furs from trapping ought to be banned and a solid and sound argument can be made for that, that is the irrefutable conclusion, then ban them; however, consider the matter first and fully and make the decision on the basis of merit, not of public pressure.

● (2200)

Surely if there is one Leader on this globe who has demonstrated a capacity to make decisions on the basis of principle, it is the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I fundamentally disagree with many of her principles, but I call upon her to provide leadership and to make a decision in this regard on the basis of principle. She should continue with the study and consultation and reflect some more on the issue take the time to come to a full and reasoned conclusion, and not just respond to public pressure.

What we as parliamentarians are faced with is a battle for the public mind. That is evident from Margaret Thatcher's letter in which she says that they must take into account widespread public concern. We have to win over the public if we are to win over the British Government and preserve the trapping industry in this country.

I think the fundamental question here is one of balance. On one hand we have animals and on the other we have people. The animal rights movement has done a very effective job of putting forward the case for protecting animals. I have nothing against them for doing that. However, there is another story which has to influence the decision if it is to be just and moral. The other side of the balance is people and communities. What happens to them if the industry is destroyed? I believe their case could be imaginatively and graphically presented if we took it upon ourselves to do so.

A hundred years or so ago there lived a great British writer, Jonathan Swift. The children of Ireland were starving and he used his pen to get that point across. The way he did it was to say: "We have so many children here that we ought to market them. We ought to chop them up like beef and sell them". He drew such a horrid picture that people became fully aware of the suffering of those children. We need to do the same thing today with respect to trappers. We have to do it through television, of course, because that is the way we communicate. We use television images. We have to be able to tell the British people that if they destroy the trapping industry, if they destroy the livelihood of aboriginal communities in the North, they will have increased unemployment, increased alcoholism, and increased suicide. To achieve a real balance, for every bleeding animal they see on television they should also see the dead bodies of those who have committed suicide as a result of the destruction of this industry.

If the people of Britain want to make a moral decision they have to have a balance. They have to consider the people and their communities. Those communities include more than northern communities. In the City of Winnipeg where I come