

Private Members' Business

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I am sure the hon. member will want to continue the next time the bill is being studied.

It being 5 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider introducing legislation to fully protect the Canadian environment through the institution of mandatory environmental impact assessment procedures which would allow for assessments, prior to the construction of installations, public or private, of projects which may prove to be potentially damaging to the environment.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is with a bit of a sense of *deja vu* that I rise today in the House of Commons to bring forth Motion 485.

Motion 485 is really the motion form of a bill I brought in over 10 years ago in 1979. Curiously enough, Madam Speaker, you have given this bill the title of 485. The bill title back 10 years ago was Bill 458. We have stuck with the same numbers and I hope that we will stick with the same principle of the bill as we move it from the motion and hopefully then into legislative form.

The motion states:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider introducing legislation to fully protect the Canadian environment through the institution of mandatory environmental impact assessment procedures which would allow for assessments, prior to the construction of installations, public or private, of projects which may prove to be potentially damaging to the environment.

Time is required for any new idea. I recall back in the British Columbia legislature in 1966 I brought forth an idea on the environment that related to the establishment of green belts around cities. I recall it was seen as a little bit revolutionary at that time, and I had to keep pounding on it year after year after year.

Well, six years later the first green belt legislation in Canada in the same form that I presented the private member's bill was introduced. I am most pleased to see the same kind of thing happening here in Canada today. Certainly, patience is rewarded when substance develops from it.

To start to talk about this motion I think that we need to talk first a little about the philosophy—the reason for—and I think that I was reminded about the reason for on a recent trip to Asia from which I just returned. I thought as I looked at the development in the newly developed countries that the development community of those newly industrialized countries could of living, the quantity of life, at least.

I wondered as I looked at the development of these newly industrialized countries how much had been really achieved when one can't drink the water, breath the air, or find a healthy patch of green among the intense density of black and grey of pavement and concrete and among the shiny glitter of new glass and steel jungles.

The newly industrialized countries have both gained and lost as they have developed in the rapid sense of the last few years. It seems they have developed without an adequate sustainable development ethic. A quality of life rather than a quantity of life will next become an ethic that they, too, will embrace as our society has. I wonder if they will be able to afford the redevelopment costs required to meet the demand for the quality, sustainable development lifestyle necessary to ensure the survival of our global environment.

We must, in fact, develop a value that thinks of before-the-fact prevention, that accesses the environmental impact of development before the development occurs rather than after the damage begins. We must add to the rhetoric of sustainable development a practical alternative. That is the purpose of the motion before us today.

I was pleased to receive a letter from the Minister of the Environment which stated: "I am familiar with the bill that you sponsored in 1979 because it was the first initiative that would have made it statutory requirement to conduct an environmental assessment of all proposals falling within the area of federal responsibility. Although we may differ in some details, the essence of my views on EARP reform is very similar to the concepts that you have long proposed.