

Private Members' Business

bringing its federal mandate with respect to making this an environmentally sustainable urban region into the discussions.

I will give just two examples in the short time I have left. The first example is that we are now in the midst of a major bridges study in this region with major involvement from the federal government through the National Capital Commission. Notwithstanding the fact that we are now getting close to the 21st century and hopefully have learned some things from the mistakes of the past, we are in the middle of deciding where to build bridges to accommodate more cars, to consume more fossil fuels, to do more damage to creeks, wetlands, conservation areas and neighbourhoods which have been clearly established by the Supreme Court as part of what we need to consider in an environmental assessment.

What communities are looking for is not only local leadership but national leadership to look at more sustainable urban communities, more emphasis on public transit over more cars, more roads and more gas consumption, preserving in an urban environment those natural environmental features that are so important, even more important where the environment is under the major stress of urbanization. I give this as just one example. There are many dimensions to bringing environmental concerns into all our decision making.

In any case, I am pleased to speak on the motion. I think we need to constantly remind ourselves, those who are in government and those who hope soon to be in government, that our obligation to future generations is something that has to be part of all of the decisions we make in this place.

Mr. John Brewin (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, the motion that we have before us, moved by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should ensure that ship and freighter anchorages within the Gulf Islands, or within three miles of environmentally sensitive coastal sites, be required to undergo environmental impact assessments and to seek approval of affected neighbours and communities prior to receiving permission.

• (1740)

I am very pleased to rise in support of my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands. I am speaking in favour of

this motion and I hope all members of the House will agree that the motion not only is an excellent one but should be adopted unanimously by the House.

Let me say first of all that the motion itself deals with a particularly important issue to the Gulf Islanders. I have had many opportunities to visit Pender Island and the other Gulf Islands. I know that the people in the Gulf Islands who are so ably represented by the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands fully support this resolution and would ask the House to adopt it.

I am also pleased to support the motion moved by my colleague because of the work she has done as a spokesperson for our area and for all Canadians on issues of the environment in her first term as a member of Parliament.

The member has given courageous and decisive leadership on environmental issues since she first came here in December 1988. She attended the Rio conference, the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development, last year. She has been a leading member on the environment committee of this House. She has spoken out on a whole range of issues on the environment, most recently on issues concerning the ozone layer.

I pay tribute to the leadership she has given and the tenacity with which she has followed these issues. She is a great credit to her party and to her constituency.

This motion is one of a number of measures which are now before the House to deal with the issues of tanker traffic in our area and across Canada. The greater Victoria area is particularly sensitive to issues of tanker traffic and other ship and freighter traffic through the region.

We have seen disastrous oil spills on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Daily we see tankers going back and forth on the Straits of Juan de Fuca. We have been saying in this House over the last four years that it is essential that this Parliament and the government deal with the issues that occur as a result of the heavy traffic through our region.

I have the honour to chair the legislative committee looking into Bill C-121. That is a very progressive piece of legislation brought forward by this government in