

Hazardous Materials Information Review Act

independent Canadian transportation companies. That is the reality.

Are we to stand here as responsible Members and allow the legislation to pass? Are we to give it our enthusiastic endorsement, knowing full well that we would be sounding the death-knell for small, independent Canadian trucking companies?

Mr. Fulton: And a lot of medium-size ones as well.

Mr. Riis: To say nothing of the medium-size ones. We cannot compete with the larger American giants and the advantages which they have in terms of their economies of scale.

The Hon. Member for Regina West (Mr. Benjamin) went on at some length to indicate what this will mean in terms of safety on our highways. I suspect that most of us as Members of Parliament have already been approached with the kinds of tales the trucking companies foresee in terms of an unbelievably competitive environment with drivers driving for 14 hours and 16 hours straight on the highways. Those trucks will have to be kept on the highways at all times and will not receive appropriate maintenance. This means that our highways will be significantly less safe than they are today.

The situation in the United States has demonstrated that conclusively. We have long lists of various U.S. organizations in the United States which have clearly and definitively pointed out that highways in the United States have been made significantly less safe as a result of deregulation.

Mr. Fulton: There has been a 50 per cent increase in tragedies on some highways.

Mr. Riis: Good grief, it is difficult to imagine. The data keeps coming in. The Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton) indicates that 50 per cent more casualties are directly related to the deregulated environment in the United States.

It is not as though we are going into this blind. We know full well the experience down south, and now we are to apply it to the Canadian scene! Let us recognize clearly what the Government is doing. It is saying that it prefers to have large American trucking companies working in Canada. It prefers to have a less safe highway system. No one is asking for this. It is just that the Government is driven on the ideological bent that fewer rules is good business. Fewer rules might be good business for a handful of mega-trucking companies in North America, but it is bad news for small and medium-size Canadian independent trucking companies. This is the message which the Canadian Trucking Association has made so clear.

In closing, I simply want to say that we plan to oppose the legislation. We look forward to the day, not too long from now, when we are across the aisle, from the Government of Canada, and have an opportunity to undo the disaster which the present

Conservative Government is imposing upon the people of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the Parties, and I think Your Honour would find unanimous agreement that the recorded division be deferred until 3.15 p.m. or immediately after Question Period on Thursday of this week.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is that so agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

* * *

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION REVIEW ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs) moved that Bill C-70, an Act to amend the Hazardous Products Act and the Canada Labour Code, to enact the Hazardous Materials Information Review Act and to amend other Acts in relation thereto, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to make a few comments on the House concerning the workplace hazardous materials information system or WHMIS.

The primary purpose of WHMIS is to protect Canadian workers by disclosing information about hazardous substances. This kind of information is not available to workers and employers at the moment. We feel that it is something all Canadians working with hazardous materials have a right to know.