

• (1205)

[English]

I will look into this particular matter. To the hon. member for Calgary Northeast, I do not want to get into a debate. We had a debate on this yesterday.

At least at this point, it does not seem to be a question of privilege. If the hon. member for Calgary Northeast wishes to put something on the record very briefly I invite him to do so. I do not want to have this escalate into a debate.

Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I stand by the words I issued in my statement. I did not mention any particular person by name. That is all I will state in the matter.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for his intervention.

[Translation]

It is not a matter of privilege, but I give the floor to the whip of the Bloc Quebecois.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I trust you unconditionally to review this issue and to listen to what was said.

To better understand the issue and put the debate in context, I suggest that we—us parliamentarians and you the Speaker—should consider that when we say that a community is immoral, for example homosexuals, we are going after each and every individual. If we were to do the same for francophones, Jews or women in general, it would not be tolerated.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: I would like to end this discussion here. As I said, my dear colleagues, I do not want members to get into a debate on the matter. I will take care of it, I will look into it, and will report to the House, if necessary.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table in both official languages the government's response to 20 petitions.

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ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it is certainly a

Routine Proceedings

relevant day, given the question that was asked by the member from the Bloc Quebecois in the House on what we do to deal with contaminated sites.

Today I wish to advise Parliament that as a government we are introducing a new federal toxic substances management policy. What we would like to do is begin with pollution prevention to avoid the kinds of messes we saw with things like PCBs in the past.

We do not often get up in the House to discuss complex scientific issues involving complicated chemical compounds. However, we also do not often discuss the need to stop poisoning ourselves, our children, our environment, our reproductive systems, our food chain, and our genetic make-up. We do not often discuss how chemicals can affect the health Canadians and the health of our environment.

Toxic substances in the air, water, soil and sediment upset the balance of nature and jeopardize the interdependent existence of all living things on earth.

[Translation]

The new toxics policy I am announcing today will apply across the scope of federal activity—not just the Department of the Environment. The policy calls for virtual elimination from the environment of substances that result from human activity, that take a long time to break down, that build up in living organisms and that are toxic.

For other substances that threaten the health of our environment, we will implement full life cycle management—from cradle to grave.

[English]

It is cradle to grave management for those substances.

If we cannot find the means to keep certain natural substances from being released into the environment, we need to take measures to prevent generation and their use by humans. Federal laws, regulations, policies and programs will be used to turn off the tap of release into the environment of bio-accumulative and persistent toxic substances produced by Canadians.

• (1210)

What does that mean? It means saying no to toxins that work their way into the food chain. It means saying no to toxins that take too much time to break down once they are released.

[Translation]

All other substances of concern under federal jurisdiction will face the world's strictest controls.

The new policy is based on the most advanced scientific methods and concepts, and expert analysis, including computer modelling and internationally accepted criteria.