

Adjournment Debate

After hearing all interested parties, the board decided to renew the company's licence.

At this point, it would be imprudent to comment further on this issue since it is scheduled to be dealt with in the court in Saskatchewan on January 17, 1991.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table these documents for the hon. member so that they are on the record.

[Translation]

ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to repeat the question I put to the minister of Environment and which was answered by another minister, the Secretary of State. I am not satisfied with the answer I received. That question had been asked during the fire in Saint-Amable. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that many thousands of used tires burned at a depot located in Saint-Amable, which is about 15 kilometers away from my constituency of Chambly.

• (1810)

I do not like the answer the minister gave me. In fact, he said it was a provincial matter and that the problem was under consideration. He tried to reassure me by saying that during the fire everything was being done to co-operate with the provincial authorities.

I am glad the government was finally able to put out that fire. It seems to me, based on this incident that the government takes action after the fact. But often these situations are the result of a lack of leadership on the part of the federal government and also of jurisdictional disputes between the federal and provincial governments. So, while Canada expects some leadership from this Conservative government, all we see, day after day, is a government which can only act it seems after the fact. PIC/mv
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This is not what a government should be. A government should have the will to prevent this kind of problem. Saint-Amable, is only a symptom of the government who likes to play fireman instead of tackling the problem at the base. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I felt like hell listening to the answer from the Minister. I was upset because I was expecting better than that. I can tell you how upset people in my riding were by mention-

ing some polls, whether people talk about governments not only the Federal government but also the Provincial government because each one arise to blame the other. The problem Mr. Speaker is easy to understand. People are upset by the lack of action, the same old excuses that we have been hearing for so long: this is not our jurisdiction, we are waiting for the conclusion of studies. We have had plenty of studies, consultations and talks on the environment. But this government has not taken any action to regain public confidence.

I can give an example to show you how serious this is. The Désourdy Company in my riding is a responsible, respectable company that wants to dig what it calls a garbage enhancement site but which I call a landfill site. This does not require any environmental impact study. It is neither a provincial nor a municipal responsibility and it seems, according to a ruling I disagree with, it is not a federal one either. But, once the ground water is contaminated, the federal, provincial and municipal governments will have no choice but to try to contain the damages because they were unable to prevent the problem.

• (1815)

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, I could talk to you about pesticides. Maybe you have pesticides on your lawn because you want to have a beautiful lawn, but pesticides that get into and contaminate our water are a serious problem. The federal government has had this issue under study. We don't have much control over the enforcement of federal regulations on the use of pesticides by consumers.

So, in summary, I would like to say that I refuse to accept the rationalization by this government that the Saint-Amable fire was because of a jurisdiction problem or because they did not make enough studies. The time for studies is over. The time has now come for action.

[English]

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, the tire fires earlier this year in Hagersville, Ontario, and Saint-Amable, Quebec, showed that federal-provincial co-operation is necessary to clean up the problem of scrap tires in Canada. Those fires heightened public awareness about the need for co-operative action to ensure the safe outdoor storage of used tires and to address the overall issue of used tire management.