

Corporate Affairs (Mr. Lawrence), I move, seconded by the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Phillips):

That the government act immediately to repeal the federal Small Loans Act.

Mr. Speaker: Even with the greatest sympathy for the hon. member's position, I can scarcely find an element of emergency which is at least minimally required pursuant to Standing Order 43.

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TRANSPORT

MISSISSAUGA DISASTER—TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Bob Rae (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, in view of the emergency created by the derailment of a train in Mississauga, Ontario, carrying propane, chlorine and other dangerous substances, in view of the fact that over 200,000 people have had to be evacuated from their homes, and in view of the continuing danger posed by this accident to the health and safety of tens of thousands of citizens in the Toronto area, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie):

That this House calls upon the government to launch an immediate investigation into the causes and consequences of this derailment and to introduce immediately legislation concerning the transportation of dangerous goods which would provide for full and complete labelling of the dangerous substances, a program of special safety and precautionary measures and provision for the protection of the population from the transportation of these substances.

Mr. Speaker: There is a close similarity, of course, but not necessarily identity, with the earlier motion. The decision whether to receive and debate the motion ought to rest with the House. The motion can only be put with the unanimous consent of the House, pursuant to Standing Order 43. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

TRANSPORT

MISSISSAUGA DISASTER—TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS—SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Mr. Ed Lumley (Stormont-Dundas): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transport of which I have given him notice. In view of the disastrous derailment which occurred in Mississauga this past weekend, in this instance can the minister advise the House what additional precautionary methods were taken in view of the fact the railroad was transporting combustible products and poisonous gases.

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): In response to the hon. member's question, Mr. Speaker, I think he and other hon. members know that the Canadian Transport Commission has announced that a formal public inquiry will be held to investigate all matters concerning this unfortunate incident. I think we shall have to await the outcome of that inquiry to determine whether or not all rules and regulations were complied with in relation to this unfortunate incident.

• (1415)

Mr. Lumley: I am not concerned about what happened after the fact; I am concerned about what happened before the fact. I should like to know from the minister what his officials have advised him with respect to additional precautionary measures taken in all cases where transportation of hazardous products takes place.

Mr. Mazankowski: As the hon. member knows, responsibility for the surveillance of safety with respect to railways lies with the Canadian Transport Commission. Following their announcement of the inquiry, I have asked the CTC to focus particularly on the question of adequate safety standards, the ensurance of an appropriate level of maintenance and the adequacy of the inspection system: the suggestion was made in committee that the number of inspectors was insufficient. Evidence of this was adduced in the committee and provided by the president of the CTC.

I might say, as well, that we are in a position to introduce legislation with respect to the transportation of dangerous goods. This was announced in the House by the President of the Privy Council on October 11, I believe. The bill is in the final stages of preparation and could be introduced within the next week or ten days.

Mr. Lumley: In view of the fact that the government has not seen fit, to date, to introduce the legislation regarding the transportation of dangerous goods—

An hon. Member: Whose fault is that?

Mr. Lumley:—can the minister advise what objections he had, and still has, with regard to the previous legislation, the bill introduced by the former government?

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting we have not acted on that legislation. The former government introduced the legislation, but did not have the determination to bring it forward for debate other than one late Friday afternoon as "filler" legislation. We have examined that bill; we have had extensive consultation with the provinces and with the industry because there were some areas where there was less than agreement.

I am in a position, now, to state to the House that there has been general agreement on all elements of that piece of legislation; it is in its final drafting stages. I am pleased the hon. member wants this legislation brought forward, and I hope he will be disposed to deal with it in expeditious fashion when it is introduced.