

our need to increase productivity, is immense. Those who are on the environmental side of this issue have a great deal of difficulty in presenting evidence and arguing against these new substances being used.

I would suggest that there is another very serious defect in this bill, and that is that the investigation is provided for under the authority of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde). As I recall, the Minister of National Health and Welfare found that he did not have a sufficient number of people to find out whether or not hamburger in Canada was contaminated. How he will have enough people in his department to go across the country and look into every little manufacturing plant and chemical laboratory to investigate new substances that are being created, I do not know. I submit that this is almost impossible.

When we measure promise against performance, we find that the promises are great but the performance is not there. I welcome the intention. I think the idea of prevention instead of cure is a worthwhile one and certainly it is a beginning in looking at our environment in a serious way. However, it simply does not do the job. I realize that you might want to rule me out of order, Madam Speaker, but I must say, without dealing specifically with the amendment before the House, the arguments that were in the speech of the hon. member for Vancouver South are very persuasive in terms of the validity of the amendment.

Let us ask ourselves, are there solutions? What should we really do? First of all, we do not have meaningful national standards to combat pollution. Second, we continue to overconsume useless products such as aerosol bottles, about which I know the minister is concerned. I know that investigations are taking place with regard to potential risk to the ozone layer from the use of aerosol bottles. But in fact the use of the bottles themselves is a terrible waste of our economy. The contents of these bottles are rarely worth more than the containers which hold them. This waste of material and money in a resource-starved world is a tragedy, and the same is true of all the stupid and costly packaging. We are all guilty of this.

The minister, quite properly, some time ago in a speech—and, again, her record is excellent—called upon psychiatrists, in an article that I read in the *Vancouver Sun*, to help people to live in an ecologically sound way or in a way that is in harmony with their environment. I must congratulate her on that. I think that was a very forward and progressive statement and I should like to read more of it. The minister said:

"To do this we need your help," she told the psychiatrists at the opening of the Canadian Psychiatric Association's annual meeting.

People will have to revise their aspirations and life style to deal with the grim realities of the future, she said:

"It is probable that within the next ten years 300 million people will die from malnutrition and starvation."

She cited the prospect of climatic changes and fertilizer and energy shortages. Within that statement there is a grain of new thinking that is very necessary—that we are all to blame for the environmental mess in which we find ourselves and in order to change we have to think about changing our life-style. But we need some leadership, and we are not getting it from this government. We talk about conservation of energy. Where has there been a piece of

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legislation that would discourage the use of energy; the use of gasoline, for example? In fact, it is the other way: we are rushing around, so worried about our economy and so worried about the fact that car sales may be down. But perhaps we should look at a few of these matters as blessings in disguise and start reducing some of the wasteful consumption that goes on in this country.

Certainly, one of the most progressive steps that this government can take in terms of the environment is to provide massive funding for rapid transit and eliminate the wasteful line-ups of cars on every freeway and in every major urban centre in the country. Do you know that it takes longer to drive from where I live in Port Coquitlam to Vancouver than it does if you take the slowest transit vehicle every morning? Because of habit, people line up on that freeway—the same thing is true in Toronto and Montreal—and proceed at 10, 15 or 20 miles an hour.

I suggest that in terms of changing our environment, this government should take leadership in making people change their habits. But that takes courage and money, and it may even take some form of penalty imposed on those who continue to drive cars at a time when they should not be driving them, when they should be using rapid transit. Certainly, rapid transit is a step in the right direction. I suggest to the minister that if the federal government funded rapid transit in the middle of freeways, so that all drivers of cars that were lined up and moving at only ten miles an hour could see the train or bus moving past them, it might change some of the bad habits we have developed on this continent in our wasteful consumption of energy.

The last point I want to make is with regard to onus: the onus continues to be upon the regulatory agency to determine whether something is bad. The result is that we are using human beings as guinea pigs in testing new substances. For example, in terms of phenoxy herbicides, there is some evidence that it causes mutation and birth defects. The debate has raged for a long time among scientists on both sides of the issue. On balance, it looks as though those who claim it is safe probably have more evidence, but there are specific instances of birth defects which are highly suspicious in terms of the use of phenoxy herbicides for eliminating weeds, and so on.

• (2140)

The onus is wrong. What we are saying is, "You humans wait until you get cancer. Wait until the damage is done." It seems to me the onus should be on those who are introducing new and probably dangerous chemicals to justify those chemicals. We should not have to concern ourselves with the question of the Minister of National Health and Welfare investigating and determining these things. Madam Speaker. I see the minister has just come into the House and I am glad to see him. He has great capacity and has done a remarkable job in some areas, but I do not think he is perfect enough to carry out this immense task of determining the very real hazards produced by the use of chemicals that are strongly suspected of increasing the disease of cancer in the world.

We must look at the rhetoric in the Speech from the Throne, and some very progressive statements made by