

ish Columbia in the House this evening. I am speaking of members on both sides. These members should be here, because British Columbia has been endowed with a most spectacular environment, one of the most spectacular in the world. If there is not adequate legislation to protect the environment, we have the most to lose; therefore, we must speak the strongest on this bill.

Those who think this bill has anything to do with protection of the environment had better read it again. As you read through the bill you find there is a lot that needs to be added before it will be anywhere near adequate. I will start by going back four years. On April 15, 1970, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said in a speech to the Canadian Press in Toronto:

If part of our heritage is wilderness, and if the measure of Canada is the quality of life available to Canadians, then we must act should there be any threat to either. We must act to protect the freshness of our air; we must act to protect the purity of our water; to conserve our living resources. If necessary, we must offer leadership to the world in these respects and withstand the cries of complaining interests.

After four years of trumpeting, what has this government come up with? It has come up with a toothless lion, a paper tiger. What does this bill say about the remarks of the Prime Minister, the leader of the government that is sponsoring it? In my opinion, it is despicable hypocrisy, unworthy of the intellect and the integrity of the Prime Minister, let alone the minister who claims to be the Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Sauvé). Why is it so? There are many reasons. The hon. member from British Columbia should be listening to every word. How he could sit through caucus and let this bill reach the floor of the House in this condition, I will never know.

Let us look at the teeth, or lack of teeth in this bill. We are talking in terms of a maximum penalty of \$10,000. That would not even pay for the lawyers who would take the matter to court, let alone the damage to the environment or paying for a solution to the problem. It would be cheaper to destroy the river or the lake than pay the \$10,000, that is, provided the necessary information can be gathered to follow through with a charge and prosecution. I have never before seen a bill with, for example, a subclause such as 8(6), page 12, line 4, which provides that one year shall be the time in which to gather information after a charge has been laid. It would take that long to lay a charge, let alone to gather material. There should be a minimum time of two years. Such a precedent was set on another occasion.

This bill has no teeth. No matter what the minister says, the bill has no meaning. Indeed, it is a discredit to the minister, her department and to the government which presented it. When the minister introduced this bill, I thought, "She is a new minister. She has only been in office a few short months."

Mrs. Sauvé: Years.

Mr. Wenman: All right, a year. I thought perhaps even that was too short a time to expect her to come forward with a philosophical statement, a statement of vision, a statement with some direction and leadership for her department. Perhaps it is too soon. Possibly she will think about this and come through with some lofty statements such as those made four years ago by the Prime Minister,

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which have not been heard since. Possibly she will speak in terms used by Canadian writers such as Roderick Haig-Brown who, when talking about rivers and waters, said:

A river is water in its loveliest form; rivers have life and sound and movement and infinity of variation. Rivers are veins of the earth through which the lifeblood returns to the heart.

The minister must have that kind of heart for the environment, particularly our water resources. The late Blair Fraser, who through most of his distinguished journalistic career tried to capture the meaning of Canada, put it this way:

It is no coincidence that our national emblem is not a rising sun, a star, a hammer, a sickle, or a dragon, but a beaver and a maple leaf. Nor is it coincidence that there are more paintings of wilderness lakes, spruce bogs, and pine trees on more Canadian living room walls than in any other nation on earth. We may scoff, we may deny, but the wilderness mystique is still a strong element of Canadian ethos.

How does our minister respond to statements like those of environmentalists such as Barry Commoner, director of the centre for biology of natural systems at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri? Where is the challenge to this statement, challenging it as wrong or to give us a course of action to meet the statement? We hear environmentalists making statements like this:

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The environment which as an integrated whole supports human life is being stressed to the point of collapse.

I believe we are approaching, in our time on this planet, a crisis which may destroy its suitability as a place for human society. His point is that our high, modern, industrialized society is subjecting our air, water and land to a myriad minor stresses which either as multiple or as individual stresses, or in the form of yet unrecognized combined stresses, may drive the eco-system into self-accelerating changes and ultimate collapse by overstressing at a particularly vulnerable spot. I would suggest one of the most vulnerable spots is the area of water. What does the minister say about this? What does she say about this vulnerable resource, water? When I ask her questions in the House, she says, "Water policy? We have no water policy."

Mrs. Sauvé: Yes, to sell to the United States.

Mr. Wenman: Oh, regarding the export of water! Do you have a policy with regard to water generally? Do you have a general policy for water as it relates to the environment?

Mrs. Sauvé: Oh, yes.

Mr. Wenman: Well, I look forward to hearing it, because I have not heard it stated in the House as yet, and if I could get that for a Christmas present I would sure like it. To hear the minister make a water policy statement is something for which I have been waiting for six months. It would be nice to hear. What do we get, instead? We get a piece of legislation which is after the fact—legislation which leads from crisis to crisis and acts after the pollution has happened. What does it do after that? It says: Be a nice boy and don't do it again or we will charge you maybe a maximum of \$10,000. What a pathetic statement!

Why doesn't the hon. lady tell us how this fits into the over-all environment policy of the department? That is