

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS—INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION  
ANNOUNCED IN SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

**Mr. Alan Redway (York East):** I do not know how you feel, Mr. Speaker, but every time I turn on the water tap in my home, I wonder how long I will have the opportunity to drink that water. I wonder just how long that water will be fit for my consumption, for the use of my family and of other Canadians. As I turn on the tap in my home and I see the water flowing into the basin or sink, I cannot help but think of the hideous problem of the chemical dumps along the south side of the Niagara River in the State of New York. I cannot help but think of those four in particular which were formerly owned by Hooker Chemical and now owned by Occident Chemical, the Love Canal, the 102nd Street Dump, the S-Area Dump and the Hyde Park Dump, all of which are seeping slowly through the rocks along the river banks into the Niagara River and filling it with deadly Dioxin as well as other chemicals.

In one area in particular, as you know, Mr. Speaker, there is a sewer which flows from one of these dumps directly into the Niagara River carrying deadly Dioxin. If that continues, it will not be very long before the drinking water in the Niagara River, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River will be destroyed forever. That drinking water is utilized by some six million Canadians who stand to have their drinking water wiped out just like that.

The problem of pollution of the water is only one of the many problems we face in our environment with respect to pollution in general. However, as the Parliamentary Secretary knows, and all Canadians know, the problems of pollution in our environment are not just problems I feel personally, but problems all Canadians feel. In fact in a recent poll, environmental problems were identified as the number one concern of all Canadians.

Bearing that in mind, I know that other Canadians as well as myself and you, Mr. Speaker, were very pleased when in the Speech from the Throne there was a promise to give us some new environmental protection legislation. In fact, I was pleased that shortly after I asked my question of the Minister in the House, he unveiled a draft form of new environmental protection legislation. That set out a number of proposals or principles. First, it introduced the concept of life cycle management of toxic chemicals; second, it would require industry to test and evaluate all new chemicals for environmental or other human health hazards before being introduced into the Canadian market-place; third, existing chemicals would also be more strictly tested and controlled; fourth, the Minister of National Health and Welfare and the Minister of the Environment would be authorized to order companies to recall toxic chemicals at their own expense, and fifth, the Ministers would have the power to order industry to clean up environmental spills and to monitor compliance with those orders. In addition, there would also be the power to temporarily shut down any activity which is judged to be dangerous. In addition to all of that, there are new penalties which would impose a maximum fine of up to \$1 million and a five-

year maximum term of imprisonment as opposed to the present penalties.

● (1815)

The Environmental Contaminants Act provides for a maximum fine of \$100,000 and two years imprisonment, while the Clean Air Act provides for a maximum fine of \$200,000. In my view those are great improvements. I was delighted to see the draft legislation introduced into the House. However, I was disappointed by the fact that while the legislation deals with what goes on from now on, from the date of the passage of the legislation into the future, it does not deal with cleaning up problems created in the past. It does not deal with cleaning up the toxic chemical dumps to which I have referred. It does not deal with cleaning up the St. Lawrence River, the St. Clair River, Lake Ontario or the Niagara River.

There are a great many problems in our country at this time. We may not be able to force the United States to adopt some environmental protection or to clean up some of the spots in the U.S. which impact on us in Canada. There are also a great many hot spots, a great many environmental problems, in Canada to which we can address our attention and which we can clean up.

As the Parliamentary Secretary is aware, there are a great number of these spots around the Great Lakes. In fact, there are a number of hazardous waste chemical dumps in Canada. The Ontario Minister of the Environment, for instance, has identified the 10 most dangerous and serious of those as being at Sarnia, London, Acton, Tiny Township, Burlington, Streetsville, Oakville, Niagara Falls and Oshawa.

In addition, there are 32 municipalities in Ontario, including three sewage treatment plants in Metropolitan Toronto, which are discharging into the Great Lakes in excess of the levels set out in their operating permits.

There are 45 industries discharging levels in excess of their operating permits—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Parliamentary Secretary—

**Mr. Redway:** I hope tonight, Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary will give us the answer to the question of dealing with the clean-up of the past as well as the future.

**Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Forestry and Mines)):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to compliment personally the Hon. Member who never misses an opportunity to raise the issue which he has brought up this afternoon. He makes his points very forcefully. This is an extremely important issue. It is one that is very important to me and it should be important to all Canadians.

He raises a good point when he says that the legislation fails to look into the past. I recommend that when the hearings are held and the committee work is being done on the Bill that