

*Government Orders*

Growing concern with the quality of life, that is good health and a good standard of living, is evident in Canada and in other countries as well. It is believed, for example, by 88 per cent of Canadians that pollution has adversely affected public health. Forty-nine per cent believe their own personal health has been affected. Seventy-three per cent believe pollution is a major cause of cancer and 81 per cent of Canadians believe that pollution problems threaten the very survival of humanity.

Indeed, we Canadians are rightly preoccupied with our environment. It has become a rallying point for us to take steps to protect it by recycling or paying more for products and to pass legislation which would ensure the environment would be for our productive use today as it would be for our children of tomorrow.

We now understand what our reasonable environmental expectations are and we understand even more the depth of our commitment to future generations.

What are some of the basic requirements for environmental processes? Mr. Robert Gibson of the Department of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo, in September of this year produced an excellent document which I feel could serve as a useful framework for evaluating the bill before us, Bill C-78.

The most important concerns I have on this bill relate to two basic issues: what environmental assessment requirements should we expect to accomplish? Second, how do we ensure that the expectations will be met? Two expectations are apparent today. There ought to be full consideration of environmental factors and public and private decisions must extend to cumulative and global responsibilities. No longer sufficient is careful attention only to immediate and local concerns.

The second expectation concerns the resulting decisions which should positively and significantly contribute to achieving sustainability. Admittedly, there is no precise definition of the term, but the concept is clear enough, that is that our use of resources today for

economic development must ensure we have continuing reserves of these resources as well as for the future. The test of sustainability of development must encompass not only the biophysical but also the social, economic and cultural environment. Inherent in this test of sustainability are the beliefs that equity, acceptability and durability are met as fundamental criteria.

An environment assessment process design must therefore fulfil three basic principles: It must be effective, it must be practical and it must be efficient.

The third principle, efficiency, demands fairness to all parties be delivered.

The second principle requires the process and its demands to be understandable and easily doable.

That it ought to be effective means we ought to be able to encourage, guide, and, when necessary, to force the proper things to be done.

Does Bill C-78 stand the scrutiny of the foregoing basic requirements and principles underlying environmental assessment process? Let me quote: "Canada will return to the dark ages of environmental law if Bill C-78 passes in its present form", said Mr. Brian Pannell of the Manitoba Environmentalist Inc.

As a Manitoban, I definitely agree with this serious indictment made by Mr. Pannell. But why?

The purpose of this bill is to create binding legislation to ensure that environmental assessments are carried out on certain projects within federal jurisdiction. The purpose is excellent, but several flaws are evident.

Allow me in the remaining minutes to focus on a few specific clauses and to consider some amendments. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that clause 4(b) should be amended to include sustainable development as a purpose of the bill "to bind responsible authorities to the concept of sustainable development"

The purpose of this act in clause 4(a) should read: "That projects are fully reviewed and scrutinized to ensure sustainable development, as defined in subsection 2(1)".