

Professor Morse from the Canadian Bar Association told the committee: “—about the importance of reviewing regulations before the passage of the bill, is that it is very important—There is just too much scope left for regulations.”

Ms. Brown from the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office stated: “The regulations will define the comprehensive study list and the exclusion list.”

The parliamentary secretary, the member for Brandon—Souris, stated in clause-by-clause discussion: “It might be more advisable to discuss the question of the timeframe in the regulations.”

Throughout the committee’s work on this bill, time and time again, important issues relating to environmental assessment were left to the regulations. There is absolutely no question that the extent to which environmental assessment will be able to protect the environment, to safeguard the right of Canadians to a safe and healthy environment rests squarely on the regulations.

The Canadian people, through their representatives in the House of Commons, deserve to have the ability to review these regulations seriously.

This motion seeks the support of the members of this House to have all regulations laid before the House before the regulations come into effect. We are not asking a lot, but any 20 members, or 15 members of the other place, may call for the regulations to be put before the House as a motion.

A clause similar to this one exists in the gun control legislation, formerly Bill C-17, a regulatory clause that is very supportable.

Adoption of this amendment, therefore, is quite essential to safeguarding our environment. I ask for the support of the members of this House, as well as yourself, Mr. Speaker, on this very important amendment to Bill C-13.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. I would like to congratulate the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake for the key and vital role that he has played in committee in developing motions and in helping the entire process to come along and improving the quality of the final bill.

Government Orders

We in the Liberal Party do support in principle any attempt to open up the regulatory process. It is a very important one.

In this particular case, the member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake puts forward a rather cumbersome methodology so to speak. Nevertheless, it is an attempt to open up the process and this is why I commend him for having done so.

It seems to me though that a better procedure would have been to put forward an amendment that would have made mandatory the reference of the regulations to the Standing Joint Committee on the Scrutiny of Regulations. This is a committee of Parliament that has the knowledge and experience needed to examine the regulations and to ensure that the regulations flow from the intent and powers that are contained in the act itself.

That committee has performed a very valuable role in the history of Parliament. It could perform a valuable role again in ensuring that the regulations that will be produced are in line with the intent of the law. It may be that when the revision of this bill takes place some time from now, that a measure of this nature will be recommended by the government.

• (1730)

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to very strongly support the amendment proposed by my colleague from The Battlefords—Meadow Lake.

The member for Davenport and the parliamentary secretary have noted the work done by the member for the Battlefords—Meadow Lake. It has been extraordinary and certainly our caucus has been very pleased with the progress he has been able to make with the government.

One of the most serious problems that we have with this legislation can at least in part be remedied by this amendment. The Trojan horse of regulations has been recognized many times in this Chamber by members of all parties where we pass legislation which is relatively understandable by everyone in the country who wants to take the time to read it.

Regrettably, the regulatory structures that are going to come with Bill C-13 are massive. There will be at least 15 sections of regulatory powers, some of them extreme-