

*Environmental Contamination*

repeated a number of times, but again without any reference to an operative part of the bill that establishes this schedule. This may have been an oversight at the time the bill was drafted.

Again in a spirit of co-operation, I want to let the minister know we will want to take a look at this particular wording and see whether we can tidy it up a bit so it makes quite clear that the schedule is established, who established it and what goes into it. From looking at the wording of the bill, it seems that a schedule has been taken for granted, but it is difficult to know just how the schedule is, in fact, established.

As I said before, this bill has the support of the opposition and I think the support of all members in this House. I am conscious of the minister's entreaty that we put this bill through second reading quickly so that we can get it to committee. The intent of the bill is sound and deserves the support of all members of the House. I trust it will receive sympathetic and intelligent understanding from the public.

With those caveats, I again compliment the minister for bringing the bill before us. We will look at it carefully in an effort to tighten it up to achieve the objectives of the bill. I again ask hon. members to support this bill at least in principle at this time.

**Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to speak briefly on the bill currently before us, the Environmental Contaminants Act. I wish to say at the outset that the New Democratic Party welcomes this legislation. We certainly intend to support it. I commend the minister and the government for bringing this legislation forward at this time.

There are several points I wish to bring to the attention of the minister. Before doing so, I caution the members of this House and the general public that quite frequently legislation is brought in by the government which stays on the order paper. While they might be law, the regulations dealing with the environment, for example, are never enforced. I want to make it crystal clear to the members of this House that this is one of the reasons we have rather severe pollution problems facing many parts of Canada today.

**An hon. Member:** An hour ago you wanted a smelter.

**Mr. Harding:** It is not a matter of whether we want a smelter. We have legislation. I am going to give a list of some of the acts on the statute books which have sections in them dealing with various aspects of pollution and which to my knowledge have not been enforced for many years. For example, some time ago I put a series of questions on the order paper dealing with the number of infractions which have taken place against certain sections of certain acts. There is a series of them; the Migratory Birds Convention Act, the Fisheries Act, the National Harbours Board Act, the Canada Shipping Act, the Navigable Waters Protection Act, the International Rivers Improvements Act, the National Health and Welfare Act, the Oil and Gas Production and Conservation Act and the Energy, Mines and Resources Act.

With the exception of two or three of these acts—and fisheries is one department where more action has been

[Mr. Fraser.]

taken than any other—we find there has been complete neglect for a period of years by the departments concerned with regard to the policing of certain aspects of pollution which come under those departments.

If this legislation is going to stay on the statute books, not be utilized and not be adequately policed by the department, we will be in the same position as we are today with regard to many sections of other pieces of legislation which could and should have been used in the past to control pollution in Canada. If we had taken all the legislation, federal and provincial, and carried out the pollution regulations already laid down, we would not have a fraction of the pollution problems which now hound Canadians from one end of Canada to the other. Again, it is a matter of enforcement. I trust we will see the minister's department do a real job of policing the legislation we are debating at this time.

Might I make one or two general comments before getting to the bill. As far as I am concerned, protection of the environment is one of the key issues facing every nation of the world today, including Canada. After all, we live on spaceship earth. We think we are a pretty important nation. As far as we know, this is the only sphere circling around which carries life. That life is enclosed in a very narrow envelope of air, ground and water that produces the life support systems that keep mankind and everything alive. If anything happens to it, we have no place to go. We would not be able to go to the moon because we cannot live there. If anything happens to the life support systems which keep mankind alive, we know of no other planet to which we can go. Yet today—and the minister is one of the first to admit it—there are signs of trouble everywhere. They have been apparent for years. Pressure has been brought on government at all levels, municipal, provincial, federal and international, to do something about pollution problems. We have not made the type of progress we should have with such an important problem.

Canada is not the only country with pollution problems. Pollution is worldwide. It is international. Despite this, we find that even the United Nations is having trouble moving effectively in the international sphere to deal with these problems. If there is pollution on the other side of the world, it will affect us in Canada in some way and at some time. That is why eventually we need to have tough international standards and controls. We must ensure they are policed and carried out if we are going to continue to live on this earth for a period of time.

I want to give one or two examples of the foolishness of mankind in the past few years. I will first talk about the nuclear testing that has been taking place. Last year in this House of Commons we moved motions urging the French government not to have atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. We are opposed to any country in the world testing nuclear weapons, whether it is in the atmosphere or underground. This is contamination not of the air over any one country or area but contamination of the air resources throughout the world, and we are the ones who suffer. We must learn to stand up, speak out and fight for the complete elimination and ban of this stupid philosophy which some nations have that they must test nuclear weapons in order to improve their nuclear arsenals and