

*Canadian Environmental Protection Act*

provincial and territorial Governments an opportunity to provide important input in advance of final regulations. Third, the administrative agreements permitted under Clause 90 of the Bill will provide for explicit specification of how the federal and provincial and territorial Governments will work together to administer this very important legislation. These provisions are designed to avoid overlap and duplication with the administration of provincial environment statutes.

Bill C-74 incorporates major improvements to much of the environmental protection legislation administered by the Minister of the Environment. However, good legislation alone and of itself is not enough. There must be proper and effective yet fair and predictable enforcement. There must be commitment of financial and human resources to support and enforce the legislation. On June 26, the Minister of the Environment released a draft enforcement and compliance policy for public review and discussion. The policy explains how the Government intends to encourage co-operation and compliance with the law, and that enforcement officials will deal severely with those who violate this new Act.

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act is central to this Government's total environmental program. With this in mind we have already announced that Cabinet has approved \$37 million in new funding over five years to implement, achieve compliance with, and enforce the Act effectively. This final allocation will allow for the hiring of the necessary inspectors, chemical toxicologists, and other personnel.

It is clear, I am sure, to all Members of the House that the Canadian public wants and deserves better environmental protection. This Government is committed to ensuring that Canadians receive better environmental protection.

● (1750)

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Mr. Speaker, we heard the assessment of Bill C-74 from the government side, and I submit that it was an Alice in Wonderland rendition of what this Bill will do. Unfortunately, the measures on paper in this Bill are not backed up by the political will required to enforce them. In my remarks I will touch upon these aspects because it is very important that Canadians understand what is going on here.

First, let me put the Bill before us tonight in the context of the process. This is the fourth year that the so-called Progressive Conservative Party has been in power, and this is the first time that we are debating, at second reading, an environmental measure. In this period of time a number of non-environmental measures and Bills have been introduced. I mention, for example, taxes on gasoline which favour the sale of leaded gasoline over unleaded, changes in the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, and other fiscal measures which do not take into account environmental values and considerations. The list goes on at some length.

Until today the only time environmental issues or measures were debated in this House was on opposition days. The record

of the Government on protection of the environment from chemical products is not one to be proud of taking into account what has happened since 1984. In November of that year, a number of cuts were made by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) which affected research in the field of environmental protection *vis-à-vis* chemical products.

I am sure the Parliamentary Secretary will remember the cancellation of the Guelph-Toronto Toxicology Centre in November of that year. There were several incidents of muzzling of scientists in Environment Canada who were engaged in matters related to toxic chemicals. There was, first, the cancellation of and then the changes in publication of storm warnings. At the present time there is limited consultation on the renegotiation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

If you put all these measures together and include the cuts to the Canadian Wildlife Service in the branch which is engaged in measuring the impact of chemicals on wildlife in order to draw conclusions on the impact of chemicals on human health, you come to the conclusion that the record of the Government is abysmal in the field of the protection of human health from the presence of chemical products.

It is important, therefore, that as we debate Bill C-74 we remind the Parliamentary Secretary and, through her, the Minister about the record to date before they get too carried away. Contrary to the claims made this afternoon by the Parliamentary Secretary this Bill will not clean up the St. Clair River, this Bill will not clean up the Niagara River, this Bill will not stop daily emissions into the air or the water, and this Bill will not clean up the Sydney tar ponds.

In her speech today the Parliamentary Secretary tried to create the same impression which her Minister tried to create when he announced this Bill last year, that being that this Bill would be the cure-all of all our problems in the environment. In December of last year the Minister called it the toughest pollution legislation in the western hemisphere. By June of 1987, after consultations, the description of the Minister had become a little more realistic. He called it a first step toward cleaning up the environment.

We welcome that, because if the description of the Bill is honest it will not raise false expectations in Canadians and will strengthen rather than weaken the credibility of the Minister and the Department on this very important matter of public protection. The wording was toned down because this Bill does not do the great things which the Parliamentary Secretary suggested in her speech that it would.

The Minister also promised an environmental Bill of rights. Instead he was forced, I suppose, to deliver a preamble to the Bill in which, in elegant prose, certain principles are stated which have no legal status. None of the "whereases" that we see on page 2 of the Bill refer to compliance and enforcement. That is a very serious shortcoming for reasons upon which I will touch in a little while.