

*Clean Air Act*

I was concerned about the arrangements made for the inspection of motor fuels. I understand, now, that gasoline is also subject to inspection by the new department. If this is the case, I am very pleased. This is one of the points which was not made clear. It is certainly a provision we need in the legislation. Motor vehicle fuels must come under the control of the department, to ensure that they do not contain too much harmful pollutant.

There is one clause of the bill which deals with fines. The newspapers have given tremendous play to the fines which could be levied under the act. A fine of \$200,000 is possible: this has been the headline. Canadians have drawn the conclusion that Parliament is going all the way with this bill. Yet when we read the bill closely we find that not many institutions will be liable to a fine of \$200,000, though a deterrent of this type is certainly one of which we can approve. I hope the department will be tough enough to levy such fines in cases where a plant or operation is neglecting to live up to the terms of the legislation.

In closing, I repeat that I do not think this bill really sets the national standards which we want. It lacks a co-ordinated approach to pollution—this is the most depressing part as far as I am concerned—and it leaves a number of fields uncovered. I am thinking in terms of the department of the environment. Mention was made of the department having authority to deal with soil pollution, noise pollution and so on. But there are other fields—radiation and microwave emissions, for example. So far this country has almost completely ignored them. It may be we do not yet possess the expertise necessary to lay down regulations. I do not know. I do not believe we have. But I feel we should at least begin research and get on with the work of cleaning up pollution wherever it is found in our environment.

Again let me say that while the bill does represent a step forward, it is a fragmented approach to the problem. I hope the minister will accept some major amendments to the legislation when they are put forward during the committee stage.

**Mr. Jerry Pringle (Fraser Valley East):** Mr. Speaker, because of the vital importance of this bill I did not intend to speak, but since we seem to be creating some air pollution in the House of Commons today in some of the speeches we have heard, I feel I should get up in defence.

**An hon. Member:** Don't add to it, then.

**Mr. Pringle:** I am not naturally critical; I am a rather good natured man but I have to express some criticism, possibly because sitting here in the rump of the House, a little of it rubs off on me. Air is something none of us can escape. We are not obliged to go near water resources. We are not obliged to go into areas where there are garbage dumps or outpourings of effluent. But we all breathe the air every day: we cannot escape it. I therefore consider this bill to be in the nature of a priority issue. I congratulate the minister upon introducing it and I hope it will move into committee immediately. I

[Mr. Harding.]

want to be very brief because it is important that the bill get into committee in the next few minutes.

There is a great deal of evidence that air pollution is increasing to a greater extent than many of us realize.

● (3:10 p.m.)

I belong to a group of people who have spent the last 15 to 20 years flying their aircraft across North America at low level and encountering a high concentration of air pollution. I recall going into areas like Los Angeles on a perfectly clear day, and although the tops of buildings were visible it was necessary to approach and land with the use of instruments. I have sat in a hotel room in the city where you could see a blue haze across the room and into the bathroom. It was so bad that one had to go to the beach or to some other area to escape it. I am not talking about industrial pollution but about pollution from automobiles—which, of course, are directly controlled by individuals.

I think we would do well to concentrate on pollution research. This bill contains a clause referring to the widening of our research facilities. I firmly believe that although we must kill pollution, we must at the same time maintain industry. This is a point that I feel is not sufficiently emphasized in our legislation. Our air is subject to pressure inversions, so that although pockets of pollution are able to escape and disperse at certain times, they cannot at other times. I recall when Vancouver had only a small area of pollution, but now pollution has crept up the valley as far as Abbotsford and it is getting worse each year. A temporary release as a result of a violent storm is as much as we can expect.

This bill is very important and I hope we will not be prevented by technicalities from proceeding with it. The members who have been screaming "national" on almost everything are the ones who continually stand up and want to protect the provinces. They ask why the government is not doing this for Newfoundland, or that for Nova Scotia; yet they talk "nationally" on a bill of this kind. They do not accept the fact that the provinces of this country still have rights and they will continue to have rights. Even though we are able to reform the Constitution of Canada, I do not believe that in our time or in my grandchildren's time we will ever eliminate the rights of the provinces. So let hon. members be objective. When they stand up and say a measure must be national in scope, they must realize that they are asking the government to impose itself upon provincial jurisdiction. I do not think such imposition would be accepted by the provinces.

Certain measures must be national in scope, of course, and the provinces agree they must be national. As a matter of fact, I think that in the very near future controlling air pollution will be international in scope. For example, when the wind blows from Chicago, to the south, this terrible air pollution from the industrial mills moves north far enough to reach Canada. The same things happens along the Great Lakes; when a south wind blows, Canada is no longer responsible for its own air pollution. Since we are going to monitor our air