

*Environmental Contamination*

government, there should be some means by which Canadians can not only express their concern but can take effective action to prevent the pollution and contamination of boundary waters. I know there is already legislation in existence designed to deal with international boundary waters, and I know also that the government of Canada has expressed its opposition in official notes to Washington. But here we are debating and dealing with a piece of legislation which, as the minister outlined in his opening statement the other day, is bringing together important aspects of the issue which have been dealt with in isolation in the past. Here is a piece of legislation which is heralded as a major break-through in controlling environmental contamination, and I trust we shall not only consider the domestic aspects of the subject when we are deliberating in committee but also the fact that on the North American continent the prevention of the pollution of our environment, particularly of the air and water, will be dealt with effectively in this bill.

Several areas of concern have been brought to the minister's attention in the course of this debate. Members of the Official Opposition will be putting forward amendments in committee to improve the legislation. I trust that the minister, who in his presentation yesterday indicated he wanted this bill to represent a major break-through in pollution control, will take a positive and sympathetic attitude to these amendments when they come before the committee.

**Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, while the bill now before us is not related to inflation, the cost of living, the price of groceries, the price of milk or the low purchasing power of those on fixed incomes, subjects which are of prime concern, I submit, to the Canadian people, the legislation in the name of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis) nonetheless deals with another matter which is of great concern, if not of prime concern, to Canadians and to all who live on this planet, namely, environmental pollution and contamination.

To this extent, and because the bill will involve the imposition of more rigid controls, we on this side of the House wish to assure the minister of our general support for the measure, as long as due weight is given to all the implications and priorities which must inevitably enter into decisions on such questions. There are few provisions in the bill to suggest that the dividing line between pollution and the exploitation necessary for the development of our country has been sufficiently considered. The various reports which will be submitted to the minister under the provisions outlined here will do so, I trust.

My comments this afternoon will be to a large extent confined to an attempt to seek clarification—to remove some of the confusion, uncertainty and fuzziness which, I suggest, this legislation contains but which could be cleared up in committee. First of all, it is interesting to note that this is what might call a bi-ministerial bill. It is presented by the Minister of the Environment but it definitely and closely involves the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde), for obvious reasons. The situation is one which requires close co-ordination between the two ministers. I hope this co-ordination will be forthcoming and that it will be effective. I hope that indeed it will

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

be more effective than the co-ordination which has prevailed in the past between the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand)—I refer to the recent hand over of responsibilities in connection with small harbours. I believe things are on the right road now, but during the process of the hand-over the co-ordination between the ministers concerned left a certain amount to be desired. In this case, the ministers do not sit as close to each other as the two ministers I have just mentioned. Nevertheless, I trust they will be able to co-ordinate their activities in this field.

There is one thing which mystifies me with regard to this bill and I hope the minister will have something to say about it when he closes the debate on second reading. It is the use of the word "contaminant". The word everyone has been using up to now is "pollution". Suddenly, we find the word "contamination" being used, apparently as something distinct from "pollutant". Are they the same thing? I have looked up both words in the dictionary, and I find they are very close to being the same in meaning. The Concise Oxford Dictionary says that to contaminate is to pollute. I looked up "pollute" but the definition did not mention "contaminate". It said: "destroy the purity and sanctity of". That is about the same thing. Nevertheless, I am not quite sure why the minister has shifted his ground. Does he, for example, intend to exclude those pollutants which have captured the frightened imagination of the world in these last days and months—oil pollution at sea, for example? Is it his intention that industrial effluents be covered, or excluded? We are concerned nowadays about the effect of industrial effluents in the air in the form of smoke.

● (1550)

I recall hearing in a committee meeting I attended about the rather frightening prospect of vapour trails and ice trails being created by high-flying aircraft as a pollutant or contaminant of the atmosphere capable, it is thought, of altering atmospheric conditions, or environmental conditions of the world—I cannot use the word meteorological anymore—by increasing cloud cover. Is this the sort of contaminant the minister has in mind in presenting the bill with this wording, and I ask him this in all seriousness? There is another question, of course, in respect of car emission standards. Is this envisaged as part of the area this bill is intended to cover?

I also notice this wording, which again I find a little confusing:

—that a substance is being or is likely to be released into the environment—

It is true that we have to deal with language when formulating these clauses, and I am not being hypercritical. I am asking these questions and making these enquiries so I will understand what this bill is intended to cover in the way of pollutants that are being or are likely to be released. I have already mentioned vapour trails from high-flying aircraft amongst those things that are being released. I am wondering if such a thing as the *Irving Whale*, for example, which is below the water off the Cavendish Beach, is one of the concerns to be dealt with in this bill. This pollution is not being released, but it is capable of being released. Is it intended under this bill to