

• (1250)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I will recognize the Hon. Minister, then I will recognize the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton) and the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Pagtakhan).

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bouchard (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Of course Mr. Speaker I share many of the concerns of the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps). I admit indeed that some of her comments include interesting suggestions that I will examine and certainly consider. It is always a pleasure to discuss those matters with her, as the opportunity arose the other day at a departmental briefing. The doors of the Department are wide open to her, since I believe co-operation between the various Parties in this House is vital on such an important matter as the environment.

I would like to mention two specific concerns—I cannot deal with all of them, but I will deal with two particular concerns—first shipping along Canada's West Coast, and second paper mill pollution!

With regards to shipping of the West Coast, not only of nuclear waste but most certainly of oil products, much more important volume-wise, I believe indeed we must be concerned about the future as Canadians, as Members of Parliament and as a Government. Of course we know the rules implemented some ten years ago are extremely stringent, extremely severe; they involve a lot of technology, a lot of control, and up till now, no one can suggest there have been that many accidents off our coast, in view of the volume of traffic, because as we know, two tankers a day ply off our coast on their way to Alaska from the American mainland.

On that, I would like if at all possible to reassure the Hon. Member and all Members in this House that the Government moved internally and we are in the process of rapidly reviewing all the rules, all the checks in order to prevent accidents and also improve our response were one to happen. But we believe there should also be public input into that general review of the regulations in that regard and we will have another opportunity to look at that later on. A ministerial committee is working on the matter, including ministers from the West Coast, and we believe public input should be introduced in order to foster credibility and widen the scope of the review underway.

### *Supply*

I believe that this review, were it to lead to increased controls, should easily convince the Government to re-open existing agreements with the United States.

Second!

[*English*]

As far as pulp and paper mill pollution is concerned, the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps) is substantially correct. The pollution created by pulp and paper mills throughout Canada is absolutely unacceptable. However, there is a problem. She says that we do not have to adopt a new law. It may not be a new law, but certainly new regulations are required because the regulations governing pollution by those plants were enacted in 1971.

I do not blame the Liberal Government of the day for having adopted those regulations because it may have felt them to be sufficient at the time. However, for many years now we have known that they are totally insufficient. Most of the paper mills are exempt from the application of those regulations. All mills built prior to 1971 are not regulated under those exemptions and those mills pollute the most because they use old processes. Furthermore, they form the majority. We can do nothing now.

What we can do is to substitute a new set of rules under the Fisheries Act and issue new regulations under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act to control furans and dioxins.

I can assure the House and the Hon. Member that we will act swiftly and strongly on those subjects.

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, I notice the Minister did not respond to my analysis of the half billion dollars that have been cut. I will provide him with that information. Those figures are drawn from his own Estimates.

I am sure he has a copy of the report by Greenpeace on the discharge reputation and record of the mills that are already covered under his legislation. He will be aware that in most areas the mills failed even current regulations. I am not suggesting that he cannot improve the regulations to cover more mills, but the regulations already in place are not being applied.

I want to reiterate my position that it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel, he must start applying the law that already exists and coming down hard on companies that are flaunting the present law. It is not enough to say there will be new laws, we have to apply the current law or the Government will become a laughing stock and the companies will continue to discharge effluent, which is potentially cancer-causing and which creates a situation where some communities in Canada can no longer drink their water.