

cals, and even require those manufacturers and users to perform tests to check the effects of the absorption of those substances, either in the environment or by individuals, in the atmosphere or even in the ground. Those data would be absolutely essential if we are to exercise the necessary controls.

We also want to measure the extent to which those substances are being used by the public, in the atmosphere and in manufacturing processes generally. For instance, we know paint contains toxic substances.

Some substances are suspected of being toxic, those in aerosols, for instance. I am seeking therefore the authority to study those substances and their chemical, biological and toxicological characteristics. In some cases, manufacturers may be compelled by legislation to provide the government with the information it needs, information which may very well be treated as confidential. If we are better informed about the rejection patterns of these substances, Mr. Speaker, we will eventually introduce the necessary legislation. We must obtain answers to the questions we ask ourselves about the new chemicals appearing daily on the market. Phenols and freons are big questions marks. Freons are chemicals which are used as propellants in aerosol and which are suspected—I repeat, suspected only—of affecting the ozone level in the atmosphere.

That is particularly crucial in the Arctic regions because, as we know, the level of ozone there is a lot lower than at other latitudes, and consequently we must study the effects of supersonic flights over those regions because aircraft release substances that can be injurious to the ozone over our latitudes. Supersonic flights, of course, must be supervised but it might also be advisable to control the use of aerosols.

Mr. Speaker, getting all those details which are indispensable for the promulgation of regulations, controls, measures and the circulation of information, such as the objectives we have in mind in introducing Bill C-25.

I do not say, Mr. Speaker, that we do not already have a lot of information about all those matters. No, quite the contrary, as I said, the Department of Environment and the Department of National Health and Welfare and other government agencies continuously make studies based on the information they can obtain from other countries also concerned by those questions. We already have a lot of information in that respect.

And I must say that although Bill C-25 will empower us to ask manufacturers for additional information or data on the products they make, already before the legislation is even passed, before it is even put into effect I must give credit to the manufacturers who already provided information to the department on the nature of new substances they intended to introduce on the market. They are already co-operating because they realize that prevention is indeed better than cure.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is to strengthen that co-operation from manufacturers that I seek authority under Bill C-25 to officially ask for the information I need.

The legislation already in existence dealt with the direct contamination of air or water, contamination coming from industrial sewers and plant chimneys. But the new legislation will provide us with means of control over about a

Health and the Environment

hundred products that can be contaminating, even indirectly.

And that is why I needed a new instrument enabling us, for instance, to oblige manufacturers to run tests and notify us of the results. Mr. Speaker, that would facilitate the evaluation of those products and lighten the responsibility of making appropriate recommendations to manufacturers, users, distributors and, if need be, on the methods that could be used to destroy certain chemical substances considered as harmful to the environment.

The law, Mr. Speaker, already contains self-defense mechanisms against vexatious behaviour. I do not intend of course to use this legislation to launch undue inquiries, but only those that would prove essential to public interest. The law also has means of redress for those who would feel they were wronged by certain rules, orders in council or provisions of this legislation. It also provides for consultation mechanisms and, I would like to emphasize this point, the law would give the Minister of the Environment only residuary powers in cases where other federal or provincial legislation would make provision for problems of the kind we are now facing. The law also provides for penalties, which are unavoidable. In order to be effective, a legislation must provide for penalties and they are, I believe, sufficiently harsh to discourage those who would intend to violate such laws and regulations.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this well balanced legislation will enable us to make up for the failings of some of our existing laws and would undoubtedly meet with the people's desire to live in a healthy environment, allaying their concern over environment, what with all the theories we hear about this planet's limited capacity to absorb pollution.

This piece of legislation is also a proof of the modern ideas of this government, that will not let economic development and environment concerns develop on parallel lines. There is no conflict, Mr. Speaker, between those two important things, however, they must not develop on parallel lines, but they should meet so that we may find new development concepts. The legislation is therefore meant to prevent damages to the environment so that we could avoid devoting all our energies to repair damages. It would also enable us to tie up a loop, because there can be no gap, Mr. Speaker, in the feed chain or life cycle. Each defective link jeopardizes the entire chain or cycle. And as the Minister of the Environment, it is my duty to be on the alert for such defaults or deficiencies which could occur in the chain or life cycle and to suggest to the government the necessary action to restore that life chain or cycle. For there can be no gap in that chain or cycle and there is surely some interaction between what goes on land and underwater.

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce that bill to the House, because I have the impression that it meets the deep yearnings of the people as well as those of the hon. members opposite who no doubt want to join me in cleaning the environment, and say with me to the people that this government is conscientious and is conscientious of the dangers of modern development and that a wise and progressive government does not want to refrain from dealing with those problems as it becomes more and more urgent to solve them.