Proprietary or Patent Medicine Act and its inclusion under the Food and Drugs Act. I was interested to hear the minister make at least brief reference to the regulations. His comments were not detailed and I will have some specific questions related to that. I wish to take issue with the practice of the government, when introducing legislation in which reference is made to regulations which are obviously the important, operative component of a bill, to refuse to include the regulations. I want to stress the fact that while agreeing with the intent of the bill it is impossible for me to comment upon the ultimate effect or success of the legislation without knowledge of the proposed regulations and of the specific details included under the Food and Drugs Act.

● (1230)

I recognize that there is a need in many instances to pass regulations to fulfil the intent of proposed or existing legislation. However, I believe that when such regulations exist or are contemplated, if we are to have a meaningful debate and meaningful input by all those interested in the legislation it is essential for the government clearly to define the regulations either preceding the introduction of the bill, during the debate or certainly when the legislation is before the standing committee. Let me give a couple of examples which have come to my attention in the short time I have been in this House. The first one is Bill C-28 which is on the order paper and is an act to amend the Animal Contagious Diseases Act. I think it is important. Several provisions of the bill are to clarify provisions of the act for which regulations exist, and the Department of Justice has, rightly, raised questions as to whether there is adequate authority under the act to evaluate and incorporate the regulations under which they are operating. A significant number of the provisions of the bill basically are to clarify these purposes. The point I wish to make is that that bill clearly demonstrates that regulations previously passed by governor in council now form a substantial part of the bill before the House.

In the same bill there is a new feature which gives authority to regulate the care and treatment of animals while in transit, for the purpose of reducing the incidence of sickness and disease. It is an attempt to eliminate losses during transportation and provides for the implementation of regulations affecting the movement of livestock by all forms of transportation. No one questions the intent of the legislation, but I suggest very seriously that a valid judgment cannot be made on the safe and humane transportation of animals or the maximum efficiency and speed in the movement of livestock without a thorough understanding of the proposed regulations.

I strongly urge the government and the minister to establish a mechanism whereby regulations can be thoroughly assessed so that affected parties have a substantive input in the development of these regulations. I find it inexcusable that a government would introduce legislation in which regulations form the important, operative part of the bill yet the House is not privileged to assess these regulations, many of which must be in existence or formulated at the time the bill is drafted. I want to remind hon. members that regulations or proposed regulations are the spawning ground for future legislation, and as such should be part of the debate.

Another bill is the environmental contaminants bill which was recently given second reading in this House. Again I want to stress the fact that extensive reference was made to a schedule and regulations, the details of which are not included in the bill and were not adequately discussed by the minister. This practice has, again, preempted members of this House from assessing the ultimate success of the bill, and perhaps more important, the government's intentions in respect of dealing with environmental health problems.

I am certain that all hon. members can provide additional examples and enlarge on the difficulties they have in assessing the full impact of proposed legislation because of inadequate details with respect to the regulations presented to this House. I would strongly urge the minister, preferably before the completion of the debate, to provide details of the regulations under this legislation to hon. members and interested parties.

I have no hesitation in indicating that the Proprietary or Patent Medicine Act has outlived its usefulness—the minister has indicated this—but I also wish to stress that it has served a useful purpose in our over-all approach to drug therapeutics and I hope some of the positive features of the act will be retained. The minister has also made reference to this question.

Those involved in the delivery of health care have long recognized that medication for minor ailments should be available to the general public without the necessity of having to obtain a prescription. Let me give two examples of the importance of this modality of treatment. If one reviews the World Health Organization estimates, one will find that 63 per cent of drug treatment is self-medication. I refer to "View from Ottawa" of March 3, 1975, "Report on Use of Non-Prescription Drugs Released" and quote as follows:

> A preliminary government report on the use of non-prescription drugs by Canadians showed that about half of those surveyed used at least one drug daily. Vitamins accounted for the largest proportion: about 37 per cent of respondents reported daily use. Another 7 per cent said they used cold medicines daily, while another 10 per cent used cough medicines daily. Over the year preceding the survey, 96 per cent of those sampled said that they used at least one remedy-type drug, and two-thirds reported using three or more.

I think these two examples will be some indication of the importance of self-medication. I want to say that with minor restrictions I believe this feature should be preserved. To do otherwise would place an unrealistic burden on the health care system, add substantially to the over-all cost of delivery of health care services and, most important, remove a form of treatment which has benefited thousands of Canadians, with the support of the majority responsible for the delivery of health care. On the surface, the most important feature of the bill—the minister has referred to this matter—is that it removes the secrecy provisions which exist at the present time. As hon. members know, the present situation does not require a quantitative list of ingredients on the labels of drug products which come under the Food and Drugs Act. At the present time, the ingredients are secret, known only to the manufacturer and the health protection branch of the Department of National Health and Welfare. Citizens have become more conscious about the quality of products and