tion. One can foresee situations where averaging of income for contribution purposes could have an adverse effect on the pensions paid to many low and middle income earners, if it were done in the shorter period.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the hour provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. It being six o'clock p.m. I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock this evening.

At 6 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

OCEAN DUMPING CONTROL ACT

MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR CONTROL OF DUMPING SUBSTANCES INTO THE OCEAN AND TO ESTABLISH A BOARD OF REVIEW

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Sharp (for the Minister of the Environment) that Bill C-37, to provide for the control of dumping of waste and other substances in the ocean, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, continuing my remarks of earlier today with reference to Bill C-37, I should like to draw the attention of the House to the last paragraph on the last page of the bill, that is, Schedule III 3.(4). As I read this I am moved to observe that the first should be last and the last should be first because this paragraph provides for earth dumping rather than ocean dumping. I believe that every effort should be made to satisfy the provisions for dumping those substances recorded in Schedules I, II and III in the proper facilities on shore rather than in the ocean.

In reviewing the bill I notice that some concern is expressed for the ocean bottom where the various substances to be disposed of will be dumped. There is an indication that a survey must be done to determine the ecology of the ocean floor at the location of the dump. I take it that the precise location of the ocean fill and its effects on marine organisms, fish and shellfish, will be of particular concern.

I wonder if the departments concerned know where dumping has taken place in the past and how much has been done, for how long, and whether on the Pacific coast, the Atlantic coast, or in inland waters? These questions are directed particularly to Canadian ships because I am sure we have no idea where foreign ships may have dumped garbage in the past. Before the international accord that is implied in the passage of this bill takes

effect I think it is important to determine where dumping has occurred, how much, what kind, and with what effect?

We must take into account what has happened in the waters off New York city. A vast section of the ocean there will not sustain life. It is a sea of sludge, a sea of death, a sea totally lacking in oxygen. Some may believe that could not happen here but just a couple of weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, we learned about a river in Manitoba where over half a mile of water was found to be totally lacking in oxygen. So we cannot say it could not happen here.

Another question that must be answered, Mr. Speaker, is which department will enforce the bill. It is all very well to say the bill is sponsored by the Department of the Environment and to expect that department to enforce it, but by what means will it do so? RCMP patrol boats? Argus aircraft? Coastguard search and rescue? National Defence? Or is it going to be a rowboat manned by a government appointed inspector?

I cannot help but be facetious when I talk about our coastal patrol, Mr. Speaker. It is a mass of inefficiency, and is inadequate for a maritime nation the size of Canada. It is a disgrace to a country with a maritime history such as ours. It is time the government realized that it has a responsibility to the seamen of the nation in terms of protection of the nation and its coastline. This bill cannot be discussed without reference to the manner in which it is to be enforced. It is the government's duty to tell parliament and the people of Canada how the law is to be enforced. How effectively will it be enforced? If the law is to be only as effective as Maritime Coastal Command, forget it.

● (2010)

I now wish to speak about vessels flying flags of convenience. Such vessels which ply our waters are often ill kept, ill manned, and have an infamous history in all oceans. I hope that such international flags of convenience will become a thing of the past as a result of the work of the international congress.

I am also concerned about the amending of schedules listed on the back of the bill by order in council. There are three schedules. Some of the substances dealt with are highly toxic and dangerous and are now allowed to be dumped. Some substances may be dumped, if certain qualifying conditions are met; other substances may be dumped if permits are obtained. The fact remains that the schedules can be altered. I suggest that any such alteration should be brought to the attention of members of this House by the Ministry of the Environment, which should send each member a written memorandum regarding alterations. We ought to be kept well informed on how the government is carrying out its environmental responsibilities with regard to the ocean.

I will not belabour my concern for this bill. Some of its provisions may be necessary, and others are important. I understand and appreciate the concern of the Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Sauvé), who wishes this bill to be referred to committee and returned to the House for quick passage. I endorse the basic intent of the bill and echo the concerns of other members regarding the provisions of Bill C-37.