

• (2:30 p.m.)

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are one or two brief comments I would like to make on the minister's presentation this morning before I proceed to the main part of my talk which will deal generally with air pollution problems and then with several clauses of the bill in which I feel there is a general weakness. The minister indicated that the legislation which we currently have before the House was not a fragmentary approach to air pollution problems. Then, he indicated that he was very anxious to bring about the disappearance of pollution havens in this country, and said that the bill was heading in that direction. I would like to point out to members of the House that this legislation does represent a fragmentary approach to air pollution, and nothing could be farther from the truth than to kid the public of Canada that here we have a piece of legislation which is going to tackle air pollution from one end of Canada to the other.

Once you delve into the terms of the legislation you will realize exactly what I mean. It seems to me that this is just another example of the Canada Water Act which left the federal authorities almost powerless to act. We are going to get exactly the same type of treatment under the so-called clean air act as we did under the Water Act. I want to give one or two examples as I go along. What has the government done about automobiles? They are not covered by this bill and yet automobiles contribute 60 per cent of the total air pollution in this country. Yet, the minister and his department are trying to tell us that the proposed clean air act will tackle the problem of air pollution. I say to him that he may be able to deal with some of the fuels, but it will be the motor vehicle act under which emission standards for automobiles will be administered. There is nothing in here to deal with that. This legislation deals with nothing but pollutants from stationary sources. There is nothing here that deals with the emission standards for aircraft, one of the key problems facing the nation today because pollutants from aircrafts are doing immense damage to the biosphere.

**Mr. Davis:** May I ask the hon. member a question? Was the hon. member here last year when we passed the Motor Vehicle Safety Act which dealt with automobiles?

**Mr. Harding:** Certainly, I was. The very point I am making is that we have some standards, but there is no provision in this bill to co-ordinate the activities of these departments. We have been making this point for weeks. We are in the process of dealing with a government organization act, 1970, which sets up a new department of the environment with respect to which my friends here raised a point a moment ago. We spent a whole day trying to get the minister and his department to insert the phrase "national standards" in that legislation, but we were turned down. National standards are mentioned here, but when you investigate the powers of the act you find those standards do not carry the impact which the people of Canada would like to think they carried. I am very much afraid that, again, we have here only a partial

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approach to the over-all problem of air pollution in Canada.

I want to make it perfectly clear that this is a new bill in which we are trying to deal with air pollution the first time. It is a step forward but, as usual with most of the legislation we have been getting from this government, it does not go far enough nor does it encompass a sufficiently large area. The bill does not contain sufficiently clear definitions. We find that instead of this federal government department giving clear and straightforward leadership in the clean up of pollution problems, they are hiding behind the constitution, just as they did in the case of the Canada Water Act, by saying that they cannot move because provincial or municipal jurisdiction is involved. We all know the trouble we have had in trying to solve problems because of divided jurisdictions. As my friend here says, this is constitution pollution. But I want to say that, as a result of meeting people and organizations in Canada interested in cleaning up pollution, I have discovered that they all want guidance from the federal government. They are sick and tired of having the solution of pollution problems delayed because of mixed jurisdictions.

The people of Canada demand that some kind of national standard be set, and backed up by national enforcement. Such a program would focus our attack on pollution problems without fear or favour of industry, without fear or favour of governments and without fear or favour of individuals who do not mind polluting if it means an extra dollar in their pocket. We are not getting this type of leadership and we are not getting the type of legislation that would give this type of leadership to Canada. We are getting a little tired of this partial approach.

I referred to the initial remarks made by the minister, for whom I have great respect. Once we get the new legislation through, I can assure him he will have all the backing we can possibly give him in the matter of its enforcement, in the matter of beefing up standards and in the matter of drawing attention to problems in Canada to try to get stronger legislation on the books so we can solve the pollution problems from which we suffer.

• (2:40 p.m.)

Before I speak on certain clauses of the bill, I should like to say a few words about the very general approach to the problem of air pollution which I believe every nation in the world will eventually have to take. Earth is a space craft. We are whirling around in space with a thin envelope of air surrounding us. We have had trouble with water and with soil pollution. Now, we are having trouble with the air we breathe. This is why all over the world danger signals are being put up by eminent scientists, research groups and governments, warning that the very existence of mankind on earth is threatened by some of the activities in which we are presently engaged, activities to which we paid too little attention in the past. The situation reminds us of the extinction of the buffalo on the prairie or the denuding of our vast forest areas.