

of the Canadian people. The proposals in this bill will help meet the challenge of many changes brought about in our country by technological progress.

The most urgent challenge facing the government of Canada, indeed all industrialized nations of the world, is the one of survival of the human and animal species in a progressively deteriorating environment. The proposal in Bill C-207 to establish a department of the environment is most desirable and indeed, in my opinion, long overdue. In the past three years when I presented during each session of the House of Commons my bill entitled "To provide for Canada a clean air act" I called for the establishment of a department of environmental quality to fight pollution of air, water, soil and noise. Today I am very happy that the government has resolved to increase its fight against environmental pollution by establishing a special federal department and putting in charge the present Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis) in whom we have a great deal of confidence. I hope that his colleagues will give him both co-operation and sufficient resources with which to carry out his responsibilities.

Yesterday the future minister of the department of the environment outlined his philosophy with regard to environmental pollution. It was interesting to hear from the minister that he believes we can have economic growth and a healthy environment too. The minister was very frank when he stated that the massive clean-up of our polluted environment will cost both industry and consumers quite a bit of money. But to be fair, Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister will be able to convince his cabinet colleagues, especially the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson), that they should grant tax incentives both to the public and industry, thereby encouraging all sectors of the Canadian society to take advantage of all the anti-pollution devices which become available and others which may be mandatory. The federal government should also consider the removal of all types of sales taxes from anti-pollution equipment which both industry and citizens would purchase. Furthermore, the government should give consideration to creating low-interest loans to both firms and citizens for the installation of expensive anti-pollution devices.

The minister in his speech also mentioned that we need in 1971 a federal clean air act. We all agree with him. Indeed, this clean air act has been promised in Parliament on several occasions in the past few years. As a former Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare I would like to say that a great deal of work on air pollution and a federal clean air act has been done under the leadership of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munroe), who today also deserves honourable mention. In the continued effective fight to control air pollution, firm leadership will be expected and co-operation between these two departments, other federal departments and, indeed, the provinces will be necessary.

The problem of environmental quality in Canada will still involve several federal departments. May I ask, Mr. Speaker, which minister will have the ultimate task of leadership, initiative and the basic responsibility to oversee all the problems of environmental quality in our

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

country? Will the minister of the department of the environment be able to demand epidemiological studies and other research work to fulfil his responsibilities?

In this and related problems I believe that the act establishing the department of the environment should provide for a national advisory council on the environment in Canada. This council would be independent and would report to the minister. It could really assist him in his grave responsibilities. This advisory council would assess in an objective manner the progress of the federal government's anti-pollution measures and environmental protection programs. It should be an independent agency for the review of government policy in environmental matters.

The environmental advisory council would be composed of scientists, industrialists and members of the public who are concerned with environmental matters. The council would assess environmental pollutants, pollution abatement programs and other threats to the environment on a continuing basis and report regularly both to the government and to the public on the success or failure of abatement programs. Appointments to the council should be made on a decentralized basis. Further, nominations should be invited from such organizations as universities and conservation bodies, as well as industry. Furthermore, the council should be generously funded to be able to carry out research, information services, adequate field work and even hold public hearings across the country.

The information available to us in Bill C-207 includes the enumeration of the duties, powers and functions of the minister. We note especially in clause 5 that the department of the environment will be responsible for renewable and forest resources, fisheries, migratory birds and other non-domestic flora and fauna. This is a very good concept, but I believe it is still incomplete. I ask, Mr. Speaker, why our national parks and the special preserve of our wilderness, which are also the habitat of migratory birds, our flora and our fauna, have not been assigned to the new department of the environment. A comprehensive approach to environmental quality should, therefore, include the national parks. Open space for recreation and for the preservation of our wilderness is an essential element of our environment. In our study of the bill I believe the committee of the whole should give this matter close scrutiny.

• (8:20 p.m.)

Furthermore, clause 5 (e) does not include noise, which is a very important factor in the quality of our environment. The crescendo of noise, no matter what its source, is becoming more and more an environmental problem. Noise can adversely affect not only the health of human beings and domestic animals but also wildlife. It can also adversely affect archeological and geological structures. Therefore, environmental noise is in some way connected with the other pollutants of our environment.

In perusing Bill C-207 we note that both the department of the environment and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will have responsibility for meteorological technical surveys. I am wondering wheth-