

Now, I am all in favour of having standards. I think the principle of the bill is good. I want us to have very stringent requirements, but when we decide to sign a treaty with another country, we must ensure that country's requirements are just as stringent so that companies in this country will not be tempted to do what 16 Canadian companies did and set up shop in certain areas near the Mexican border where environmental standards are not as strict. We cannot afford to let this happen again.

In concluding, I would like to mention what was said by the Canadian Electrical Association. Generally speaking, the association felt that the above concerns would not be addressed if the bill were passed in its present form. Consequently, it recommended making certain changes, and stressed more specifically the need for putting an end to the risk and uncertainty for provincial proponents, as reflected in the way the courts had interpreted current guidelines so far.

Although their impact on the environment is very benign, electricity producers are uncomfortable with this legislation, and at the same time we have this uncertainty which is felt by all Canadians because until the debate on the Constitution has properly clarified jurisdictions, it is useless to vote on bills and plans that will have to be redone a few months from now. I would like to repeat that I support the principle of the bill, but it would need a lot of changes, and I would have some suggestions to make in this respect in my next speech.

[English]

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on some of the remarks made by my friend, the member from the Bloc Quebecois. At the end of his speech he said that he is looking at an overlap of jurisdiction, and he says that delays due to environmental overlapping will stop investment. He was alluding to that. I gather the overlap could be the federal jurisdiction and the provincial jurisdiction.

I wonder what the answer is to that. Is the answer to drop our environmental standards? I do not think so. I do not think the hon. member would advocate that and I do not think he did advocate that, but he came perilously close to saying that. Would the other answer be to have separate countries? Then, clearly, we would have not an overlap between Quebec and Canada. The problem with that, it seems to me, is that we will still need to have

standards unless an independent Quebec, as proposed by the Bloc Quebecois, proposes to drop environmental standards in order to attract investment.

• (1610)

I would hope not. Is that what the new Quebec is to be about? I heard the member from Montreal, another Bloc Quebecois member, in Question Period urge the government to censor Mordecai Richler's upcoming book.

While I may not agree with all the things Mr. Richler is saying in his book, I felt a chill on the back of my neck with the notion of censorship. If you do not like an idea you censor it. Is that the new Quebec? I would hope not because I do not think this is a very strong position from which to argue.

We are talking about the environment. Surely the problem with the environment is bigger and I say this to the hon. member from the Bloc Quebecois; is the environment a federal matter? Is it a provincial matter? Is it a local matter? Is it an international matter? Fish swim, as one Quebecois once said. I think he was Prime Minister of this country and he was talking about who should control the jurisdiction. Fish swim from the waters near one province to another province in the maritimes. They swim to the international waters.

Winds blow. The winds blow from the United States, pollute Canada and vice versa. Therefore one could argue that the environment is an international matter.

The way to approach the environment as to what the constitutional position should be, should be who can best govern the environment. How would it work from a practical point of view. Sometimes it may be national. Sometimes it may be provincial or sometimes it may be local. Sometimes the jurisdictions may overlap. That may not be a bad thing. I will give you an example of culture, what is happening to culture now. You can make it similar to the environment.

In culture, a federal organization like the Canada Council is working very well for Quebec artists. They are getting the money. There is an arm's length relationship and so on. Quebec artists are saying: "We want to keep them". At the moment, I believe there are some problems in the Quebec cultural bureaucracy. The overlapping system that we have for an artist in Quebec, where the artist can get money and help from the federal government or the provincial government, is working. He can go to the federal government and get good