

Government Orders

In fact, in the preamble we say we believe in the concept of sustainable development.

In conclusion, I would like to say that sustainable development is a concept that requires a strong mind and a strong heart for what are required are reorientation in our current economic strategies, as well as a will to make financial transfer payments between and within communities, provinces and countries.

The concept challenges us to self-evident truths that this human planet can survive without us, but we cannot survive without its life support system.

In its present form, I cannot support Bill C-78.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, there are very few times in Canadian history that the public came together unanimously to either support or reject things.

We have a situation in Canada right now where the public is together because they oppose the GST. We have a situation where the Canadian public is quickly coming together, wishing that this non-elected Senate be abolished because of the plugging of the Senate by the Tories and because of the double-cross by the Liberal senators when they did not take their opportunity to kill the GST.

We also have in Canada a coming together, a consensus of Canadians that they want an environmental review process that will have some teeth and ability to protect the environment. There is a strong consensus growing in the Canadian public that they will not tolerate this type of inept legislation. They say that the environmental process must have at least these six principles. They may want to have others.

• (1610)

First, the environmental review process must be non-discretionary. No cabinet should have the discretion as to whether it is going to take place. Mandatory, that is the first principle.

Second, the environmental review process must be independent, particularly of political interference from government. They will not accept anything less than that.

Third, the process must be open, open to the public and open and above board so that people know that a proper and thorough assessment is being done.

Fourth, they want it to have the technical competence to really examine all of the issues involved, not just some of the peripheral ones but all of the implications both in terms of that immediate project and the long-term effects. Some of them are quite far away. We have heard of examples and I will be referring later to the effect of the Kemano II project, hundreds of miles away on a riding like mine in Surrey.

Fifth, they want the panel to have independent research so that they are not relying on what Alcan tells them or what some other developer tells them or certainly not what some cabinet minister and his department tells them.

Sixth, they want there to be the possibility for real and serious interveners participation where they will have funding and resources and time to properly put their position before a review panel.

I mentioned in this House yesterday the Big Bend in Surrey. It is one of the last freshwater marshes on the lower Fraser River estuary. Right now it is under tremendous threat because of the lack of an environmental review process. The CNR, a tool of government, expropriated the whole area adjacent to the marsh for an intermodal yard. It put it in. The municipality, the local people, no one had a say.

Now we have upstream Kemano II being started where the government has waived an environmental review. It is going to drop the Fraser River three feet. What is the effect on Surrey Big Bend going to be? We have marine life there. It is a fish habitat. It could be very critical and is undoubtedly very critical to salmon spawning. We have beaver there. If you drop the water level three feet, what effect is that going to have on the beaver? There are blue heron. No one has done an environmental impact. We have a developer coming along and saying: "What I want to do is just fill the whole thing in, preload it for an industrial site, dump dirt in there, and backfill".

There has got to be a mandatory environmental review process. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the residents of Surrey and my riding will not tolerate a bill like this. They will not accept it where there is discretion at every