

Government Orders

my first speech, that young people are really concerned about the environment. This was on a broader environmental issue. The petition, as you will recall, was from the students at Sir Frederick Banting Junior Secondary School in Coquitlam. Those students were concerned about a loophole.

It is very technical. You really have to know what you are talking about to get into this issue. The students really got into it. They found a loophole in the international whaling commission moratorium on commercial whaling. They found that you could in fact kill whales for scientific research purposes. Under the guise of science, you can butcher a number of whales and you can supposedly conduct the research. You then send the whales to the marketplace and sell them. What happens then is that countries like Iceland, Norway and Japan which were trying to observe the whaling moratorium then say: "Well, we had better get back into a full scale commercial whaling because it has been going on anyway".

I cite the petition of the students from Banting Junior Secondary School for two reasons. One of the reasons is the sophistication of the young people dealing with a major international environmental issue in a complicated way. Second, as the member for Skeena was saying, it shows once again that what you see is sometimes not exactly what exists, in this case sort of looking at a way of killing whales for scientific research when in fact they are still trying to look at money in the market. That is why we have to be so careful with this particular bill.

I was just looking at the press release that was put out on this bill by my party where the hon. member had outlined a number of points. There were a number of points that we put forward to try and amend this bill. There were 111 amendments introduced during the committee's review of the legislation. Some of them were accepted. We, in the New Democratic Party, managed to change the bill by including some of the changes.

First, forcing the government to assess alternatives to major projects affecting federal jurisdiction and requiring that the need for a project in the first place be determined before it goes ahead.

Second, drastically reducing government discretion—that is why this amendment is important here—in

deciding what projects are assessed, how they are assessed and what factors have to be taken into account during the assessment and whether a project should go ahead.

Third, requiring a review of this bill after five years.

Fourth, improving public participation, strengthening support for sustainable development, increasing the protection of aboriginal rights and including physical and cultural heritage in the definition of the environment.

It is very important having these items to strengthen the bill. We must go farther in this debate in the House and seriously consider the amendment that has just been presented by the hon. member for Davenport. As I understand it, it is an amendment that will protect us from a minister who is not particularly sympathetic or weak, present company excepted, who will be lobbied by a large corporation or by some other interest and will back off and delegate his or her power to some other group. That is why this has to be very tightly controlled.

While I am on my feet, I also want to make reference to something that the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake said. He said that the environment in his riding is truly beautiful. He mentioned Meadow Lake and a summer picnic I had the privilege of attending with him.

An hon. member: You were the guest speaker.

Mr. Waddell: My friend says I was the guest speaker. Well it became less nice after that. The hon. member said he had been to India after that and stated how difficult it was to find a pristine lake in India.

• (1520)

One great British Columbian, former Justice Tom Berger, I want to inform the House, is in India doing the first of its kind, an international impact study sponsored by the World Bank dealing with the Saravar Dam in India on the Narmada River. That is very interesting because 15 years ago or so, Justice Berger did the first environmental assessment of a great megaproject, the proposed Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline from Alaska and the Mackenzie delta down to southern Canada and the United States. This was the first of its kind in the world. It was the first real look at a project before the project was built. That is where we learned a lot of matters that are in this bill. We learned how to