

Government Orders

I think that is very germane. Let me again give an example. In the budget we have just had, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, the greatest source of bleating and crying for government welfare, has just received \$178 million new dollars. There has been no assessment of that policy despite the government's plaintive pleas and promises that there would be in the green plan. But if you add up everything of energy, mines and resources, everything from the green plan, everything from all the other government agencies for this whole coming fiscal year, there is \$55 million for alternate energy and for conservation at the federal level for the whole of Canada.

What my friend from Davenport is arguing for is that in a situation where a project is going to have negative implications—and the nuclear industry is one. No one any longer argues vigorously, with scientific basis, that the mining of uranium, the processing of uranium, and the operation of nuclear plants are without environmental impact—severe, long-term, intergenerational environmental impact.

What I am saying here, and what my friend from Davenport is saying, is this. Let us say a project to store all the nuclear waste in Canada would go to Brandon—Souris, to the parliamentary secretary's constituency; it was all going to be trucked there and dumped in his backyard. We read then where it says: "the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects that can be justified in the circumstances". It might create jobs in Brandon—Souris and it might lead to the re-election of the parliamentary secretary, and there might be other things. What my friend from Davenport is saying is that if it has to contribute to the goal of achieving sustainable development, it would fail. It would fail on those grounds.

What we are talking about here is trying to close up some of the more glaring loopholes that are visible now in the legislation. Later this afternoon I intend to come back many times to the holes that we know of in the regulations. There are 15 sets of them being developed that give loopholes for Atomic Energy of Canada, loopholes for the railroads, loopholes for mines, loopholes in fisheries, loopholes all the way through.

As I said earlier, the regulatory framework that comes with this legislation is like a box of Cheerios. It is a gigantic series of loopholes joined together to exempt almost all projects from mitigation and review. In the government's own documents it predicts that after all is said and done, after thousands and tens of thousands of projects are reviewed, it expects only a couple, with the new Bill C-13, to actually get to a full public review.

Many of us believe that the benefits to society generally, to the economy generally, and clearly to the ecology of Canada and the world are best served by having criteria out there that are well known and well understood—what compulsory projects, what ones it will be mandatory to review. My friend from Davenport, in his two amendments, simply proposes that we not leave it up to a political determination of justification and circumstances where there are negative environmental implications, that we proceed in those circumstances only if the longer-term benefit impact of that project is positive towards sustainable development.

I certainly think all members of the House should support and vote for such an objective.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu): Madam Speaker, I shall talk about the amendments but also about the bill in general because I think that for us, especially Quebecers, this debate fits in with the whole constitutional debate as well.

What worries me is that this bill asserts total federal control over jurisdictions that occasionally or usually were Quebec's, especially over energy, for example.

The latest constitutional proposals would give the provinces exclusive jurisdiction over energy. If energy is an exclusively provincial domain but the federal government controls all discussion of environmental issues and all environmental requirements, what use is that power?

This bill again shows the contradiction that has long been evident in the constitutional debate on power sharing. Similarly, we saw a while ago the Minister of Communications announce that the government intended to do something that was opposed to the spirit of the discussions now under way.