

*Supply*

they will be bringing up the issue, not just with academic interest but with serious concern.

I say time and time again in the House and in public speeches that the future of Canada is our young people. Their future is surely on my mind as I am delivering this speech today. We owe it to the young people of our great nation Canada to be deadly serious about protecting their future.

I have been involved with both the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development and the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, especially on forestry issues, since the commencement of this Parliament. In that time I have become very aware of our environment which impacts the flow of air and water. It does not have anything to do with man-made political boundaries. These lines that have been arbitrarily drawn on a map do more to fragment or impair our ability to control our elements within our environment than any other force.

In Canada competing provincial jurisdictions create an imbalance for industry and influence investment decisions being made by business. By way of example, as an alternate member on the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage I have looked at national park boundaries. Unique ecological realities are frequently dissected by those national park boundaries.

Environmental events inside a park reflect what is happening outside a park simply because they are part of the same unique local ecology. Insects and disease that destroy our forests while developing within the national park boundaries can spread across that man-made line and destroy commercial forests. Of course the opposite may also be true. For example, river pollution from industry on the upstream side of a park can have severe consequences for wildlife and ecological balance within a national park.

I cite these examples to underline current Canadian examples of the potential negative environmental results in fragmenting Canada by creating a sovereign state of Quebec. The arbitrary man-made boundaries, lines drawn on a map to carve the province of Quebec out of our great nation, cannot possibly give us any comfort from an environmental perspective. Political activists in Quebec want to develop control over their own geographic jurisdiction, including generation of their own environmental protection regulations.

The point of my speech today is to talk about the environmental concerns facing our nation and show how a separate Quebec jurisdiction could have a harmful effect on that province and the remainder of Canada.

I am not raising this point on the environment to tell tall tales of dark horses and earth shattering catastrophes but simply to outline all of the consequences a separate Quebec will have on our nation and that province.

Here is a small sample of what has happened since the beginning of this parliamentary session. I say with the greatest respect to the Bloc Quebecois members on both the Standing Committee on Natural Resources and the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development that I have viewed their intercessions as being somewhat narrow and oriented only to Quebec.

For example, our natural resources committee is studying responsible forestry management especially where so-called clear cut logging is used to answer the question: Is clear cut a legitimate tool that can be used by responsible professional foresters?

We are trying to assist the Canadian forest service and the ministry of natural resources as they bring forward a Canada-wide position on sustainable forest practices in international meetings. Those meetings will be attempting to establish international standards for sustainable forest management. The standards will lead to ecological labelling for forest products world-wide.

Placing a new international boundary between Canada and a new state of Quebec would simply complicate an already complex problem and divide our collective voice on the world stage. Will the province of Quebec, for example, as an independent state be prepared to utilize identical standards in international discussions on eco-labelling or would it be a competing voice to Canada?

Healthy forests generate oxygen. It is the air we breathe. Creating a new political jurisdiction will do nothing to make me breathe any easier.

The Liberals in their red book wanted to work toward the position of an environmental auditor general for Canada.

• (1310)

Following exhaustive hearings, the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development produced a detailed report on the position of a commissioner of the environment and sustainable development. The Liberal election promise called for an environmental auditor general. The decision to proceed with the position of the commissioner instead of an auditor general was a consensus decision that came from serious discussion following exhaustive hearings.

The Bloc Quebecois committee members offered a dissenting opinion. While this dissenting opinion is a legitimate part of our national Canadian process, I know that if the Bloc Quebecois were representing an independent Quebec today we would not be proceeding with this very important function.

My party supports one window environmental review for all provinces and our country as a whole. Could the Bloc possibly argue that the concept it represents is not myopic and unique to Quebec?