

Government Orders

legislation of this government or any government must be built.

There are other problems as well with Bill C-78. The scope of the environmental assessment in this bill has been narrowed—not widened but narrowed—to the point where those of us in this country who would seek to involve every project that affects human beings find ourselves in the situation—and I will elaborate upon this—where the government can declare exemption after exemption, as it has done in the case of Kemano, Rafferty and Point Anconi.

The assessment is not mandatory. In other words, this government can decide who its friends are and who its enemies are, and treat them differently.

• (1700)

Closer examination has demonstrated that, outside of the United States, there is no government that has brought in an environmental bill with this amount of discretion, without objective standards of assessment, with no way that anyone can plan ahead and no time limits on the assessment.

When the business community appeared before us, the conclusions they drew were exactly the same as those of the environmentalists who appeared before us. They said that they cannot live with this bill. They also said that it was impossible for us—

An hon. member: I agree with the hon. member, absolutely.

Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard): The member opposite stands up and speaks for all that side of the House and says that I am right.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, I do not understand that interjection. That side of the House has stood up and unequivocally agreed with me. I want to congratulate that side of the House. I congratulate the members opposite. For once in their lives they understand what a terrible thing they are doing to this country.

Oh my God, this is indeed a great day for Canada. Finally, for the first time in my history in this House an intelligent word has been spoken on that side of the House.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, I do not understand how other members can come in and start to laugh. I suppose they find the environment a laughing matter. Oh no, please stay, do not leave.

The environmental assessment process in this country must not be open to political manipulation. We must have clear rules that people can understand. Environmentalists must know how they are allowed to go forth with their objections or their modifications. Indeed, members of the business community must be able to plan and arrange their financing. Yet, that is not what the government does.

This government stands up here day after day mouthing vacuous statements about how it will get the economy moving. Yet, it turned to the business community and said: "We will not give you a bill that will allow you to plan. We will not give you a bill that will allow you to finance. We will not give you a bill that will enable you to create new jobs. We will not give you a bill that will enable you to compete around the world. We will give you a mishmash of political statements that essentially will reward our friends and destroy our enemies." That is not the way to run a modern country.

As far as the environmentalists are concerned—that vast army of people from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the great north who, every day for little pay, totally concern themselves with the protection of this planet—when they come forth and say they want intervenor funding, when they say they want to be able to come to the table, they want to be able to match the great governments and the great corporations with their war chest, they want to be able to provide intelligent and profound objections, they want to be able to show how projects can be mitigated. Does this government say: "We will provide intervenor funding"? Does this government say: "We will provide you with the ability to be able to stand up to your opponents"? No, not at all. This government says: "This country is for the rich and the