

Government Orders

I would suggest to the Government of Canada that we should use BT 100 per cent. If there is a deficiency, if there are companies that say it costs too much money, then perhaps the Government of Canada should put some money where its mouth is and stop this destruction of our environment.

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to participate in the final reading of Bill C-13. One thing I do find regrettable—and it is perhaps the symptom of the political priorities of some members of this House—is that there are two ministers responsible for the environment and neither has participated in the third reading process this week.

I do recognize why the Minister of the Environment is in Vancouver. As a matter of fact there is some history I am interested in noting. A federal contract was released to Burson-Marsteller Canada Limited in the amount of \$189,524 to implement the media relations and communications program for Environment Canada at Globe 92. I am sure the minister wanted to make sure that he got good mileage out of that almost \$200,000 expenditure with Burson-Marsteller of Bhopal fame.

Similarly I find somewhat less than amusing in this part of the debate that neither of the Liberal environment critics could find the political will or political priority to participate in a debate which the Minister of the Environment described when he appeared before the standing committee as follows: "In this case we have legislation that is complex. I think it is one of the most important projects to be introduced in this Parliament".

That is the minister's view on the priority, regrettably, of a very important and very complex bill, one that I regret to say truly is only a half full glass. That extra effort could have been made to make this the kind of legislation that would withstand the test of time. We have seen how quickly the 1984 cabinet guidelines order has come apart, or in some people's minds came together as an administrative law, as a result of the various and many court rulings there have been to take it from an Order in Council to the administrative law it is now recognized as being.

• (1730)

As I said, it is regrettable the two political parties that frequently go out and try to sell themselves as the great answer on serious environmental issues have taken the most important phase of this legislation so abominably laxly.

Out there, there is concern. Members from the Bloc have been raising on a regular basis the fact that this afternoon in the Quebec assembly a unanimous motion was passed opposing this legislation. It is also worthy of note that the province of Quebec—and I quote from today's press coverage of it—is not calling for withdrawal of the bill.

Let us keep in mind this day that Bill C-13 in its final stages is being used as a political lightning rod and as an opportunity to create focus in the province of Quebec on a constitutional issue. As the member for Elk Island and others have pointed out, there has been an abundance of opportunities for members of the Bloc and for other Quebec members to have appeared before the Bill C-13 committee.

We must keep in mind that this piece of legislation has been moving for four and a half years. It was introduced for debate by the leader of the Bloc Québécois, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean. The bill, without change, was transformed at the end of the last session from Bill C-78 and given new light so that it could be Bill C-13. The words that were there on the last day of the last session are the same words in Bill C-13. It is precisely the same bill.

The kind of brinkmanship, or perhaps more properly put, brinkpersonship, that is practised a bit too often on some issues is being applied here and it should not be. Anyone who truly understands and has taken the time to understand what the Brundtland commission said in the spring of 1987 on sustainable development and on how we can perhaps, and only perhaps, achieve a sustainable environment for human life and for the life of most other species would not be playing these kinds of political games on a piece of legislation I personally do not support because it does not go far enough. I ask my friends in the Bloc Québécois and every member of the National Assembly in Quebec today to keep in mind not only what was said in Brundtland but what is going on in the environment of this planet.

This is not an issue to play politics with. Birds fly between boundaries. Fish swim between boundaries. The air above us is seriously affected by global warming and by the hole in the ozone. We have recognized, perhaps for the first time in this century in just the last few years, that the exponential rate has climbed in the extinction of species. For the first 50 years of this century it was one