

establish a federal environmental assessment process, because it is contrary to the higher interests of Quebec, and that the National Assembly opposes its passage by the federal Parliament". I just received that motion which the Government of Quebec approved unanimously just a few minutes ago.

I say to the member for Ottawa—Vanier that we who represent the Bloc Québécois and who are here in this House strictly to defend the interests of Quebec, believe that this bill is unacceptable for Quebec. We considered this bill to be unacceptable for Quebec even before the vote taken by the National Assembly. The Quebec government just confirmed our opinion and Premier Bourassa, who is not a sovereigntist, says that this legislation will harm the economic development in Quebec, adding that Quebec is quite capable of solving its environmental problems. I have a question for the member for Ottawa—Vanier. First, what does he think of all that? Second, he said earlier that there were some political stakes and that the bill would keep politicians from making politics with the environment because the environment is very important. I personally consider this to be a very important issue as well. However, I believe that just the opposite will happen with this bill. There will be chaos again regarding powers.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I did not say the bill was the invention of the century. I did not claim either that it satisfied everybody. I simply said that it was a step in the right direction. If the hon. member thought that I was taking it out on the federal government, he was mistaken. The federal government should support the environmental assessments which, maybe, could show us that a project is not good or that there are alternatives to it.

• (1640)

If I fully understood the bill—and I admit that I have not examined it clause by clause, like several of my colleagues, but rather that I read it and examined it in my own way—one of the positive aspects that I recognize and see in it is certainly the establishment of a formal assessment process and a joint review mechanism in the case of conflicts between levels of government.

Government Orders

I talked about my riding which, being situated in the national capital region, occupies a key place in interprovincial transportation. I think that the Quebec side cannot go it alone and say: "Too bad, but we do not care about making it easier for trucks to carry materials into our province. We are not interested in finding out whether it is a good thing or not to allow such a road link between two places". I think the bill suggests a framework for different levels of government, federal or provincial, native or provincial, federal or foreign. I refer particularly to the United States.

Today reviews are undertaken on an *ad hoc* basis. Somebody makes a decision but there is no structure, no formal framework. That is precisely what the bill provides, a framework for the process, but we have not seen the regulations. I ask hon. members to wait a while, like we all do, until we see the regulations. We will have an opportunity to discuss them further in the House. Reviews will be made regularly and five years from now maybe we will look at the bill and realize that it was not appropriate, that it did not help to solve the problem. We will see. But we should not say today that the measure is bad because it provides a framework, and I feel this is a positive aspect, as it allows the establishment of a formal process for joint consultations between different levels of government.

If the Quebec government or the Quebec legislature voted against Bill C-13, I will wait to see the results. I did not understand why, but perhaps I missed something, I admit.

Mr. Alex Kindy (Calgary-Northeast): Madam Speaker, I agree that the environment is extremely important for our society but, nevertheless, it is up to the provinces to determine whether they have the means to go ahead with a given project.

I would like to quote, for example, Mr. Klein, the environment minister for Alberta, who appeared on November 19, 1991, before the Legislative Committee on Bill C-13, an act to establish a federal environmental assessment process. I would like to quote what he said on page 10: