

nitty-gritty and the substance it does not manage to do that.

This is probably one of the reasons the Canadian Environmental Law Association, in a statement issued today concludes: "CELA, Canadian Environmental Law Association, cannot support Bill C-13 as amended and we recommend that even at this late stage, the bill should be substantially amended to address the major deficiencies identified therein".

One has to put this in a broader international context. Canada is making very strong commitments abroad to the concept of sustainable development. The Prime Minister of Canada at the United Nations in 1987 or 1988 committed himself and the nation to the implementation of sustainable development in the Brundtland report. In 1989 in The Hague, the Prime Minister again made a very clear strong commitment to sustainable development. Yet when it comes to the test of introducing such an important measure, we do not see the political will that corroborates the theory and puts it into practice.

The Government of Canada appears to be strong on promotion and exhortation of sustainable development but non-operational when it comes to the practical, the implementation of that concept and reinforcing the theoretical framework within which sustainable development finds its expression. Let me be more precise and explain what I am trying to say.

In the Brundtland report of 1987 there were several priority areas which were outlined as areas where institutional and legal reforms were identified. They went from the concept of moving downstream to going to the sources of environmental damage. They dealt with the effects of environmental damage. They saw the need for reform in the assessment of global risks and the need to change institutions to make informed choices in the area of providing the legal means. That is where we are right now with Bill C-13. Finally they saw the need for measures that would invest in our future.

The Brundtland commission recognized environmental assessment as the key mechanism, as the instrument to initiate some of these very important reforms. Therefore this exercise on Bill C-13 at third reading becomes

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so important because it will be at the root of so many important decisions.

In Canada we have had a process of environmental assessment since 1974. It was an administrative process. Then in 1984, under the Liberal administration, cabinet modified this process and set up certain guidelines under the name of the environmental assessment and review process. They were issued by means of an order in council which became publicly known. Under the Conservative administration, the guidelines were interpreted as being discretionary. In April 1989, a Federal Court ruling on the Rafferty—Alameda dam case interpreted these guidelines not as discretionary but as mandatory and treated them as federal law. It was that decision by Judge Cullen which understandably triggered the production first of Bill C-78 and then of Bill C-13. The government had to take certain legal initiatives.

• (1620)

Let me take you back to 1987 because it is important. At that time there was a national task force on the environment and the economy. To its credit the government of Canada was one of the first to move on the Brundtland report to produce an analysis of our *modus operandi* in its recommendation in the September 1987 report. I am quoting now from section 24 of that report of the national task force where it reads: "All ministers must become directly responsible"—I repeat, "all ministers" because this is important in the analysis of the over-all bill. "All ministers must become directly responsible and accountable for the environmental and economic consequences of the policies, legislations and programs".

The task force also recognized the cost effectiveness of assessing the sustainability of policies and so on and went on to say: "Sustainable economic development would minimize environmental input and future cleanup costs by advanced and integrated planning. In the phrase the remedial reactive approach would be replaced by anticipate and prevent as the dominant concept underlying environmental economy integration.

The political and economic structures of Canada and the world are awakening to the need to make economic development sustainable. Decision-making has not yet adapted to fulfil this need. Change is necessary and it must occur now". This is what the task force wrote in