

*Government Orders*

Some colleagues opposite in the course of speaking to specific amendments made reference to the fact that young people have a very strong and genuine concern for the protection of the environment.

I would agree with that. I would echo those words because I think younger Canadians today are very conscious of the fact that it is to them that our generation is leaving a great deal. In some of it we can take pride in terms of what we pass on to other generations.

In other instances we might wish we had done a better job than we have done to date. I would say that without in any way laying blame to other administrations that have been before us because that is an inadequate explanation for what has transpired.

All of us in this House and all of us who have been here for some time have had a responsibility to ensure that this type of legislation indeed is law. Perhaps what we could say is that at long last we are on the verge of making it law.

I personally would express a desire that we could have been able to move more quickly than we have.

• (1610)

Our deliberations at the time were time-consuming. At times they were particularly frustrating for the two chairmen who are sitting here near me, the chairman of the committee studying Bill C-78 and the chairman of the committee studying Bill C-13. Although the deliberations were perhaps a bit more time-consuming than they anticipated or indeed, on occasion would have wished, the legislation which is before us now is better as a result.

It is better as a result of the witnesses who gave us testimony. It is better as a result of the co-operation which was most marked and very commendable within the committee. Again, I reiterate my thanks to all who were party to that process. It is better legislation as a result of departmental officials who gave us the advantage of their advice.

I present Bill C-13 for third reading. I am pleased by what we have achieved. I recognize that the task is far from completed. Other members will be standing in this place in years to come. They will be ensuring that this legislation improves with the passage of time.

I feel that what we have before us is a good piece of work. I ask members of the House to not only give it their serious consideration but also reasonably speedy consideration.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport):** Madam Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest to what was said by the parliamentary secretary, and I think he is to be commended for his very balanced and very honest speech.

[*English*]

We have now come out of a long tunnel which, measured in terms of time, has been almost two years. What is before us here today represents a small step in the right direction. The parliamentary secretary has quite effectively managed to describe it as a great step and that goes to his credit.

He went out of his way in committee to accommodate and to facilitate the interventions and the ideas that were put forward both by colleagues of my party and of the NDP, wherever possible, so that the process became meaningful in a manner that I can recall very rarely happened in the history of other legislation.

When and where these suggestions that came from the opposition side were not accepted, it was certainly not because of lack of trying on his part. It was because of lack of political will upstairs. One has to recognize, and I gladly do, the phenomenal effort on the part of the parliamentary secretary in facilitating the process and in making it meaningful in a manner that is unique in the history of parliamentary committees.

In that sense, I want not only to recognize it but also to thank him and congratulate him on his very fine, thoughtful, perceptive role laced with frequent humorous interventions which at times were an enormous help in diffusing tension.

Having said that, one must conclude that unfortunately the government did not seize on this unique opportunity of practising sustainable development.

The bill, although it attempts in its introductory, theoretical portions to set out the framework that is reminiscent of sustainable development, particularly in the clause dealing with purposes, when it comes to the