

*Government Orders*

Would he not be interested in the problem that this legislation minimizes the transfer from one tax deferral scheme to another? Would he not want that very complicated financial legislation analysed in such a way where the committee could employ independent actuarial help? It cannot do that under the standing orders governing a legislative committee.

I was wondering why he had in mind taking the position he has taken so far in this debate.

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very thoughtful question by the chairman of the finance committee.

He said at the beginning of his remarks that the opposition is filibustering this debate. We have had five or six speeches, from 295 members of Parliament, on what he describes as incredibly important legislation that has financial implications that are very significant and that will touch the lives of millions of people. He is saying that we are filibustering because five members of Parliament have wanted to discuss this matter.

That betrays an attitude that concerns me. It betrays an attitude of the government that says that any debate, any discussion, any examination, any analysis is too much, and for most of its policy I can understand why it would not want any examination or study. We saw that with the goods and services tax. They went to my own province of British Columbia and said, "This is going to affect the lives of every British Columbian for years and decades and we are going to allow about eight hours of hearings in British Columbia so that a handful of people could appear before the finance committee." That is their idea of input and discussion and consultation. It is an abuse of this place and the traditions associated with it.

Having said that, I am just registering my concern because we have seen this from time to time. When a matter is referred to a committee the government uses its muscle in terms of its majority and we see the tyranny of the majority say, "We don't need any witnesses, we are going to ramrod this legislation through and we will use our majority muscle to do that", and the opposition parties are simply cut out.

That is not the way Parliament is supposed to work, but unfortunately that is the way the Conservative government has worked too often.

My hon. friend has indicated today in the House of Commons that if this matter is referred to the finance

committee it will have an opportunity to hear an appropriate number of witnesses, that it will take considerable time to analyse all of the implications involved. That probably takes a number of days of discussion beyond the witnesses. And my hon. friend nods in agreement.

• (1220)

I realize that a considerable amount of expertise exists on the finance committee. I recognize that my hon. friend for Yorkton—Melville has worked on that committee and on this piece of legislation. My hon. colleague for Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt will be participating. I feel confident, recognizing their contributions to this legislation and to the debate so far, that their contributions, along with those of appropriate witnesses, would be best. I am certainly prepared, on behalf of my caucus, to say that with those assurances of adequate witnesses, adequate time spent and adequate resource people being involved, we would have no difficulty in seeing this go to the Standing Committee on Finance.

I want to make it clear that I understand that my hon. colleague for Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt has communicated with my hon. friend, the chairman of the finance committee, and indicated our concerns and I understand that he is prepared to agree that all of these terms be met. If that is the case, we would have no hesitation in sending this piece of legislation to the appropriate committee which is the finance committee.

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kamloops has made a very able speech and I congratulate him on his presentation. He speaks with great clarity and obviously he feels strongly on this subject. But I want to give him a chance to correct something on the record because I know he would not want to mislead either the House or Canadians by his suggestion in his speech dealing with the tax bonanza that he suggests is reaped by those who take advantage of the RRSP deduction, even in its existing form, let alone in the expanded version that the government is proposing in this bill.

I think he is aware that registered retirement savings plans represent deferral of tax. The person who makes the claim for the deduction pays no tax on the money but the money then goes into a special fund and is taxed when it comes out of that fund and is received by the person who put it in. In other words, it is a deferral of tax on that income which is allowed to grow in that fund. The depositor is hopeful that by retirement the fund is quite large. As the money is paid out to the recipient, the