

*Time Allocation*

On December 9, 1982, the Hon. Member for Halifax West (Mr. Crosby) said this in the debate:

We have the statutory model already. It was mentioned in the motion introduced by the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

He is talking about Bill C-27 introduced by the former Clark Government. He continued:

When he was Prime Minister he introduced Bill C-27, so we could start immediately to resolve the problem.

Where is the immediacy today, Mr. Speaker? All we hear is speech after speech, 88 speeches on second reading. He continued:

We could start with the enactment of the statutory provisions contained in Bill C-27, and we could start immediately on a parliamentary review of existing Crown corporations.

You will note that the motion introduced on December 9, 1982, talks a lot about the Auditor General. I will quote the Auditor General from an interview on March 16, at the time this Bill was introduced. The reporter was putting questions to him:

Are you confident that this new legislation will correct the problem?

He is referring to the lack of accountability of Crown Corporations. The Auditor General replied:

Well, it goes a long way to correcting it. I'm sure that any set of legislation can be improved upon but, basically, this does address all the questions or the majority of the questions that we were raising in our chapter two, two years ago.

He is referring to the Auditor General's report two years previously. The reporter then asked:

So we don't really know what these guys are up to. That's the real problem.

The Auditor General said that we will improve parliamentary control, Government control, board of directors control and so on. Therefore I think we can be assured that the Bill we have before us has had extensive consultation with many groups, including the recommendations of the parliamentary committee, the Lambert Commission and the Auditor General, and it does many of these things.

● (1550)

In discussions we have had with opposition members, we have made it clear that if they bring forward worth-while and constructive recommendations, suggestions or amendments at the committee stage, the Government is willing to consider and implement them if they will strengthen and improve the Bill. We cannot do that on second reading. We are hearing demands to discuss amendments at second reading and to see the regulations drawn to the Bill. That is work for the committee stage. We want to do that in committee stage. We want to go into great detail with the various groups and individuals who will be called before the committee to give testimony and to review the Bill. However, we must get out of second reading stage.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Opposition has gone into some kind of apoplexy because of the polls which came out last Friday. There was great consternation a couple of weeks ago when the Gallup poll came out. No one really believed the results. However, when the Carleton poll came out, which

essentially substantiated that the Opposition was in a slide with regard to public support, they called a special committee—

**Mr. Kilgour:** A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert):** The Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) on a point of order.

**Mr. Kilgour:** Mr. Speaker, you will know that in the House we are forbidden to impute motives to people and that we have a rule of relevance which I guess is observed more in the breach than in the practice. I wonder if the Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) would be so kind, through your direction, to follow the rules with respect to both imputing motives and relevance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert):** I would find some difficulty in recognizing that as a point of order. However, I will remind the present speaker that he has two minutes remaining for his remarks.

**Mr. Foster:** Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) is very tender and nervous about the situation. I really would not want to impute motives. However, the Bill seemed to be moving along and we seemed to be getting to a stage where we thought we were going to have a vote on it late last week or early this week. I do not know whether there was a certain nervousness about the Bill as to whether it was going to meet the needs that people perceive for the accountability and control of Crown corporations. However, suddenly the Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) made the brilliant move of putting the six-month hoist on the Bill rather than voting on it to get it moved into committee. I think there are many Members on the other side who are very knowledgeable about this. I think they have some very constructive things to say about the Bill. They have some positive recommendations which will be very useful in the committee stage. However, we really cannot deal with amendments or detailed study at the second reading stage.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I think the Bill does a great deal to meet the challenges for increased control and accountability for the many Crown corporations. We essentially have three big ones which have a lot of subsidiaries on which we want to exert parliamentary and government control. I hope that Hon. Members in the Opposition would join with us to move this Bill out of the House at second reading and into committee stage where we can deal with it in more detail and hopefully see it implemented in the next few months.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert):** Order, please. Before recognizing the Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, and since he raised the point of relevance, I will tell the House that in this type of motion the Chair has been quite lenient. Both speakers so far have transgressed the rule concerning relevance. Since the Member has raised the matter himself, he might keep that in mind. Nevertheless, it has been habit of the Chair to turn a deaf ear, if I may use that expression, to the subject of relevance in this type of debate.