

impression that sometimes Hon. Members from a certain part of the House may be under the influence of spirits of either one kind or the other.

The point I am trying to make is that I think all Members of the House would appreciate it if the Hon. Member were allowed to finish his speech. We have a certain number of problems hearing him because of all the noise.

**Mr. Beatty:** Because of the spirit of exchange.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I woke up Hon. Members opposite. However, I think you, Sir, may have put them at ease.

I wish to talk about the regional banking system and what it means to the country. In the 1970s, the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party supported an extension of the banking system to give regional banks an opportunity. We know that the socialists would like to nationalize the banks; but at least we in the two stronger Parties in the country want to give the regional banks an opportunity. Thus, we gave them that opportunity and they invested out west. They invested in the energy industry and all matters connected with it, despite the problems which they faced.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** How can you say that with a straight face?

**Mr. Lewis:** When these regional banks went out and attracted deposits, they attracted them from municipalities, colleges, universities and pension funds. In supporting the concept of regional banks and in paying back those depositors we are simply supporting the concept of a regional banking system. It is an absolute shame that members of the New Democratic Party—and I appreciate there are not too many Liberals out west—purport to represent the West.

**Mr. Gauthier:** There are plenty of Liberals out west.

**Mr. Lewis:** It is a shame that the members of the New Democratic Party are against the regional banking system and want to squash that system.

**Mr. Orlikow:** We are for an honest banking system.

**Mr. Cassidy:** You won't bail out farmers!

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) would not know a farmer if he saw one.

**Mr. Cassidy:** I have them in my riding.

**Mr. Lewis:** The farmers would laugh at the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre. They laughed at the Hon. Member when he was leader of the New Democratic Party in Ontario. He got laughed out of the provincial Legislature, and he is fast working at being laughed out of this House.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Rodriguez:** You're being laughed at right now.

#### *Time Allocation*

**Mr. Lewis:** What the whole matter boils down to is the fact that we as a federal Government have supported, in the past, the transfer of billions of dollars to the Atlantic provinces because we believe in strengthening the entire country. We have invested \$1 billion in the aircraft industry in Quebec to help that particular area of Quebec. We have assisted the eastern banks with the Dome refinancing. We built the St. Lawrence Seaway. In this country we believe in regionalization and in helping those areas which need help the most. I am sorry that the New Democratic Party does not believe in that type of thing.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Lewis:** I am sorry that the New Democratic Party, with all its western representation, with all its members from Saskatchewan—

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Whose Bill is this?

**Mr. Lewis:**—and Manitoba, does not believe in regional banks.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** You killed the banks.

**Mr. Lewis:** I notice that there are not too many of those Members in the House today. Perhaps Hon. Members opposite should ask them how they feel about the big five. Maybe Hon. Members in the House should ask their colleagues who are not here today—

**Mr. Rodriguez:** You ask Barbara, you killed the banks.

**Mr. Lewis:**—how they feel about the big five and what sort of support they have for them.

I wish to close by saying that we believe our banking system in Canada is sound and stable. The steps we are taking in repaying the depositors are being taken to support the banking system. The members of the New Democratic Party and the Liberals are fighting the paying back of deposits made by hospitals, municipalities—

**Mr. Gauthier:** Uninsured depositors.

**Mr. Lewis:**—pension funds and universities. I think Hon. Members opposite should go and ask those universities—

**Mr. Gauthier:** Cover-up, that is what we are opposing.

**Mr. Lewis:**—how they feel about the delay. Every day the passage of this Bill is delayed, interest which would be paid to those hospitals and pension funds is delayed.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Tell us who they are.

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Who are they?

**Mr. Lewis:** Hon. Members opposite can have that on their consciences if they like. They can go out and campaign the next time around and say: "Yes. I delayed passage of the Bill because I did not want you to get your interest payments". If Hon. Members opposite wish to do that, then I invite them to