

*Government Orders*

The hon. member referred to the report of the Round Table. I wonder if it is the same Round Table which on October 15, 1990, wrote to the Prime Minister, and I quote:

Dear Prime Minister, The National Round Table commends your government on the environmental assessment reform package tabled in the House of Commons in June of this year, and welcomes the proposed improvements to the federal assessment process.

Is that indeed the same report from the same Round Table, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the the hon. parliamentary secretary for the question.

I think the government is trying to play some games here with this prestudy committee.

**Mr. Fulton:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Taylor:** It was obviously a very important committee when it was appointed in June. I have no question at all about the timing that the minister is referring to.

**Mr. Fulton:** First one in the history of Parliament.

**Mr. Taylor:** My colleague for Skeena indicates to me that this was the first prestudy committee set up in the history of Parliament so obviously it had been given some serious thought by members opposite and had been given a certain amount of importance. Hopefully, that was not just for public perceptions back in June. They now do not seem to put the same importance on that committee.

With regard to the games that I am talking about, Mr. Speaker, while that prestudy committee was appointed back in June, the chairperson of that committee was not selected and appointed until September 24, when Parliament came back into session here after its summer recess.

**Mr. Fulton:** Shame. Smoke and mirrors.

**Ms. Hunter:** Smoke and mirrors.

**Mr. Taylor:** Smoke and mirrors, Mr. Speaker. Smoke and mirrors.

The other part about this is that the prestudy committee could examine all aspects of this bill and in fact send back to the government arguments for change before that bill was introduced for second reading. It could be completely redrafted under its terms of reference.

The legislative committee would be responsible only for amending that bill clause by clause. In fact, a redrafting of the bill under the current committee structure in this House would be impossible and that is what we are left with now, if we are not allowed to carry on with the prestudy committee and then bring the bill back into this House for second reading.

I am hoping that the government is not attempting now to get debate along a certain extent and then invoke closure on this bill because, in their words, "Oh, there has been enough debate on the bill". Obviously, there has not been enough debate on the subject matter of this bill and we have to find ways to redraft this flawed and inadequate bill dealing with the future of our country and the future of the earth.

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, I compliment the member on his excellent remarks regarding Bill C-78. He is quite correct that the government is providing all of the smoke and mirrors that it possibly can in relation to this bill.

Let me paraphrase and requote one of the only witnesses who appeared before the special committee and that is Ray Robinson, the present head of FEARO, who pointed out that the existing 1984 cabinet guideline order which is in place goes further than Bill C-78 does in its present form.

How could a Parliament possibly consider passing a piece of legislation that does not go as far as the existing Order in Council? We are getting a lot of flim-flam from the government side.

We also have yet to hear from the Minister of the Environment who proclaims around the country that this is an important legislative measure. Well, where is the minister? The minister has never appeared before the standing committee on environment, has never appeared before the special committee on Bill C-78.

We are the first special committee this Parliament has ever had to redraft a piece of legislation pursuant to the recommendations of the McGrath commission which thought in terms of parliamentary reform. It was a piece of legislation that had a broad impact on the majority of Canadians. The committee should have been allowed to prestudy and redraft it, to have it come back before it completed second reading. In fact a democratically changed bill in terms of the entire principles that were within it could come back before the House, making the