

waffling, almost hysterical yielding to the process that is going on and is characterized by the present government, then so far as Canadian governments are concerned I feel we have been going downhill at a rather rapid pace. Indeed, in that context I would say that the Liberal party of 1953 to 1957 was much more worthy of the name Liberal than its counterpart today, even though I may have been pretty critical at the time of some of the things that government did.

They say that all things in life are a matter of contrast and comparison. I do not mind admitting that I have been around here long enough to have some perspective on the attitudes and viewpoints expressed by cabinet ministers in the discharge of their governmental responsibilities. More is the pity that in this day and age, when the dangers to the future of Canada are more glaringly apparent, we find ourselves with a government which after all these years of moaning and groaning has brought forth, for the consideration of Parliament, nothing better than this bill.

I would suggest to the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary and his colleagues that he accept, with a little better grace than was apparent in his speech tonight, the fact that at least some of us are prepared to stand up and be counted on the issue of really doing something effective to protect the integrity and the future of our Canadian way of life. For a brief period I was domiciled outside Canada. I was a landed immigrant in another country. But as a young man I made the choice that I wanted to come back to the Canada where I was born, because I felt there was something valuable and worth while in being Canadian, that ours was a society which in some respects was different and unique, where I could feel at home, and I wanted to play my part in preserving and enhancing it.

This is a responsibility that any member of the House should take even more seriously than does the Canadian who has no responsibilities beyond those of an ordinary private citizen. This is the place where we should be in the forefront of building a future for Canada. This is the place where some of us hoped—the present Parliament—real steps would be taken to enhance and protect the future of Canada. So far, Mr. Speaker, we have hoped in vain. So far we have been faced with a weak and insipid piece of legislation. If one reads this particular clause as it stands, it does nothing more than hold out false hopes for the Canadian people for something that has no substance and reality. I would suggest the least that could be done in the context of this clause would be to accept the attempt made by my colleagues to strengthen and broaden its intended purpose.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

Mr. Robert P. Kaplan (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, rising so late in the evening, when there may be a vote, presents quite a dilemma because I would like to say one or two things about the progress of this debate. But I also hope there will be a vote tonight and because of that hope I will try to confine my remarks to less than two minutes.

I think it is quite unfair to accuse the opposition of obstructionism in the debate on this bill. For example, in the committee where this bill was discussed there was a tremendous amount of co-operation. In fact, if there had

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not been co-operation the bill would not be back in the House today. Those of us who want this bill should be grateful for the co-operation we received. Talking about the progress of this debate today, again I do not think there has been obstruction. But we come to the other question of whether there has been the kind of co-operation that is required to get the bill through the House in the time that all of us see is available.

• (2150)

I am rising to urge all members to show the kind of co-operation that was evident when the bill proceeded through committee. There has been a lot of debate to the effect that foreign ownership is a big question; foreign takeovers are a big question. But as I see it, the question is whether we are going to debate it or do something about it.

An hon. Member: There is nothing in the bill to do anything about.

Mr. Kaplan: We have a chance to do something about it and I hope that all members who are in favour of the foreign ownership policy will see this bill as a step in that direction. For a moment I should like to dwell on an argument raised by the Committee for an Independent Canada when it appeared before our committee. I hope that none of the presentation of that committee on this particular aspect has been adopted by any hon. member opposite. They took the position that this bill, which moved in the right direction, moved so little that it was their duty to obstruct it, to prevent the country from deriving some little benefit so that there would be damage to Canada in terms of more takeovers or foreign ownership so that the government would have—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, please. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member has referred to obstruction from members on this side of the House, the opposition and the particular stand they may or may not have taken on the Canada-First Committee. My point of order arises from the action taken in the committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs when the chairman, the hon. member who just sat down, saw fit to take upon himself the authority to rule on his own questions and in this way stop the action of any other committee member. Any chairman who takes over a committee and refuses to accept a point of order, and as chairman rules on his own decisions, does not make it a worth-while committee.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I think it is a kind of anarchist point of view to say that we bring about big progress by preventing little progress. I want to conclude by saying that I hope that is not the spirit in which members of the opposition approach this bill, and that they will see this as little progress which is worth making and progress which they should support.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Is the House ready for the question on motions Nos. 1, 2, 3, 21 and 28?

Some hon. Members: Question.