

I have, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure you realize that when we give this kind of blanket power to a Cabinet Minister, we give him a lot of discretionary power to decide what the regulations may be. One of my frustrations with this place and I know one of the frustrations of the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid) is that this institution is often not very democratic. We tend to give a blank cheque to a Minister.

● (1140)

Sometimes the blank cheque is a good one because we have a Minister who is responsible and sensitive and who does a good job; but sometimes we have a flop as a Minister and someone who does not do a good job. Sometimes, even, the Minister does too good a job. I see the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East (Mr. Allmand) in the House and I remember the excellent job he did with the Indian people of the country, but because of that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) threw him out of the Cabinet. That is a shame.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: With due respect to the Hon. Member, he appears to be straying from the motions before the House.

Mr. Nystrom: I would never challenge you, Mr. Speaker, as you have a lot of experience here, but I want to show what can happen when the House gives so much power to the Prime Minister's office or so much power to a Minister's office, as would be the case with Clause 21(1). As it stands it would give them the power to establish any regulation they want under this Bill. Clause 22 of the legislation provides that within 20 days of proposed legislation being laid before either the Senate or the House of Commons, 30 Members of Parliament may sign a request that there be a debate in the Commons Transport Committee, or 15 Senators can sign a request which would be referred to the relevant committee of the Senate. That is not good enough, Mr. Speaker.

I want to oppose that section of the Crow Bill very strongly, Mr. Speaker. I want to urge all Members of the House—and I am sure the Conservatives will agree—to vote for Motion No. 47 which would improve things marginally. It would change the number of Members of Parliament required to request a special debate in the Commons Transport Committee from 30 to 15. Why should only 15 Senators be required to request a debate? They are not elected and are not responsible, in any direct sense, to the people of Canada. They are not responsible in any way whatsoever. Why should 15 Senators be able to file notice for a special debate yet it would take 30 MPs to file for a special debate?

Mr. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River): It is a smaller House.

Mr. Nystrom: I do not care what the size of the House is, it is an undemocratic House. It is a disgrace in the 1980s to have a legislative body that is not elected, that is not responsible. It is a house of patronage for the Prime Minister of Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I must call to the attention of the Hon. Member that he seems to be straying from the subject matter of the motions before us.

Western Grain Transportation Act

Mr. Malone: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I know you brought me to attention when I was speaking a few moments ago, but I must say that under closure surely Members should have more leniency on an issue as important as this. I believe, since it is a Member from another Party who is speaking—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member is raising a point of order. What is before us is a debate on Motions Nos. 47, 48 and 49, at report stage of the Bill. The fact that time allocation has been adopted is not the issue before the House; that was debated under a separate motion and was adopted.

The Chair is in the hands of the House. The rules of the House say that we are at report stage and we are debating Motions Nos. 47, 48 and 49. I did call the Hon. Member to attention and he very politely conformed to the request of the Chair and found that he was able to make some very good points with regard to the motions. I am sure the Hon. Member who has the floor will be able to follow his good example.

Mr. Malone: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the Hon. Member making the same point of order? It is irregular to raise the same point of order.

Mr. Malone: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If the Hon. Member is making a new point of order the Chair will listen, but the Chair asks the Hon. Member not to simply repeat his point.

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make is that there are important amendments but they do not necessarily all follow, seriatim, as being the most important at the first.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair has ruled on the Hon. Member's point. The Chair has no alternative but to call to the attention of the House the motions currently under debate, Nos. 47, 48 and 49, and to request Hon. Members to confine their remarks accordingly. The Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom).

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, Clause 22 of the Bill deals with the House of Commons and the Senate and provides that it will need the signatures of 15 Senators to request a special debate but that it will need the signatures of 30 MPs for a special debate. We have moved an amendment to reduce the number of MPs to 15. Perhaps one of our reasons for doing that is that we are concerned about the future of the Liberal Party. The way the polls are going, there may not be 30 Liberal Members here after the next election. I am sure they will want to have the ability to file for a special debate on some of the regulations made under the Crow legislation. I know that matter is of great concern to the Hon. Member for Kenora-Rainy River, Mr. Speaker, as he has already come over here to join me. Perhaps that indicates how he will vote in a few days time.

We have had an articulate speech on Motion No. 48 from "Red Ray", the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West (Mr.