

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PATENT ACT

ALLOCATION OF TIME TO CONSIDER SECOND READING AND
REFERENCE STAGE OF BILL C-22

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council) moved:

That, further to the notice given on Monday, November 24, 1986, by the Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council, and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 117, in relation to Bill C-22, an Act to amend the Patent Act and to provide for certain matters in relation thereto, one additional sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the second reading and reference to a legislative committee stage of the said Bill; and

That, at fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for the consideration of government business on that day, any proceedings then before the House shall be interrupted, if necessary, for the purpose of this Order and, in turn, every question necessary to dispose of the said stage of the Bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of regret that I rise to put this motion. As Your Honour can appreciate, we have had a number of discussions, but have been unable to reach agreement under Standing Order 115 and Standing Order 116. There have been extensive negotiations with the Opposition House Leaders in an attempt to get some form of realistic time allocation for the advancement of the debate on this Bill. We realize that it is a complex issue and that there are various points of view on the matter. The Government has been frustrated by the fact that the Opposition Parties have used every tactic, every dilatory motion and every conceivable attempt to circumvent and subvert the process of parliamentary democracy and to subvert what is really the essence of this institution.

• (1230)

If the Opposition Parties are so concerned about this Bill, why not debate it first and send it on to committee to have a thorough and thoughtful airing of all the contents? The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre) has indicated his willingness to be available at any time, to make all the studies and background information available so that not only Members of Parliament but Canadians right across the country can have the full meaning of this legislation and discern the full impact of it.

We have gone through a series of interruptions, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to document them for you briefly. We had difficulty introducing the Bill. It was only through procedural expertise that we were able to introduce the Bill. On November 6 we had leave to introduce the Bill and on November 7 the Bill was actually introduced. Four days were spent on second reading on November 20, 21, 24 and 25. On so-called dilatory motions and events there have been some 13 hours, almost 14 hours, of valuable time of this House wasted through votes and procedural wrangles. That does not augur well for this institution.

Time Allocation

I have a tremendous amount of respect for this institution. I have respect for individual Members wanting to express their points of view on their own behalf and on behalf of their constituents. In this case Parliament has been frustrated to a large extent and actual debating time has not been as long as we would have liked because a tremendous amount of time has been wasted, about 23 hours in total. Thirteen dilatory motions have been proposed. Ten hours and eight minutes have been spent just on voting, Mr. Speaker. If you consider the cost of operating this place at \$1.1 million per day, it becomes—

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Would it be equitable for the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) to give us the cost of ringing the bells in the last Parliament, something which was never done? This is a serious concern for elderly citizens in Canada—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): That is not a point of order. It is a point of debate. I am sure the Member will have an opportunity to make his presentation.

Mr. Mazankowski: Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member wanted to take issue with that particular point he should have done so at the time. I watch Members of the New Democratic Party. They have come up with no original tactics. They have borrowed most of them from other Parties.

Mr. Gauthier: You wrote the book on dirty tricks.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: I simply want to point out the reasons and the justification for the Government moving in this manner, albeit regrettably, Mr. Speaker.

As to actual time spent, the waste of time and the dilatory procedures that have been invoked on this institution, the Opposition House Leaders, myself and representatives of my office have been trying to work out some kind of an agreement. We started on November 26 trying to reach a realistic timetable for the passage of this legislation, including the allowance of time for the legislative committee to travel across the country to hear witnesses. That proposal was advanced by the New Democratic Party. It was a condition the New Democrats put to us. They also asked that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs provide the necessary information on the studies to which he referred to back up some of the statements. He agreed to do that. We wanted as well to get some agreement with respect to report stage and third reading. We tried in earnest to work out an agreement but it was not possible.

We proposed consideration of this Bill in all aspects, including committee travel and assurances that all representatives who wanted to appear before the committee would be heard. We suggested a logical timetable of February 15, which is more than two months. This Bill has been around since June, 1986.

Mr. Boudria: No.