

I suggest the opposition should be given the right to pick out five or six, or eight or ten bills—whatever the agreed number might be—which it felt should be open to unfettered debate. Having been given that right, the opposition should agree to housekeeping measures going to committee with little or no discussion, and to a two-day time limit on the debate of other legislation. I put this forward as a common sense approach to the present situation in which, on the one hand, the opposition says, “This debate must go on forever,” and the government says, unilaterally, “The debate must end.”

A scheme of this sort involves, of course, a degree of understanding which does not now exist. Oh, we do have a form of consultation; we meet as House leaders and discuss these things, but in the final analysis the decision is with the government. I have proposed an idea of the kind I have just outlined on a number of occasions over the years. It has been considered by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization. In the last session, that committee produced a report which was supposed to streamline the work of the House. That report got nowhere because it did not meet with general acceptance.

Mr. Speaker, the only approach the government takes toward the provision of time is to cut or limit. It never wants to give anything; it just wants to take away. We came out of that committee last session with a report to which there was no possibility of getting agreement. No consideration was given to the kind of proposal I am putting forward. I am not suggesting, of course, that the regime I propose is perfect in every detail, but something along those lines would make sure that our procedure worked much better than it does.

Someone said to me, when I was discussing this approach, “What would happen in the case of bills which were not on the list at the start of the session?” Well, if the government was not smart enough to list all the bills it wanted at the beginning of the session, bills which were brought in later would be in the third category, the category which would be debated without time limit. The government always objects, of course, to any program of that sort because it looks at part 3 and says it does not like a provision for unlimited debate. But, Mr. Speaker, we have it now unless closure is brought in, and when closure is brought in everybody is unhappy. Surely the time has come—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, we have just heard from the hon. member from Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) very valid suggestions which deserve our consideration. In my opinion, the government and the opposition should carefully consider these proposals and accept them. If those proposals require some amendment, this can be done, as the hon. member said himself. Certain governments, including the Swedish government, operate in a way somewhat similar to that mentioned by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. For the second time, we are debating a closure motion

#### *Allotment of Time for Bill C-11*

on Bill C-11, that is on the same bill. This must stop since it embarrasses everyone.

Until recently, in Sweden at least, sittings are held on a set schedule and debates are divided into three categories and also held on a set schedule, as for bills on financial legislation. They also must be debated within a certain period. Routine bills, for instance, are debated on a set schedule and finally, there is the general debate. So I think, Mr. Speaker, that to be logical we should use a similar approach and better organize our parliamentary debates. I think that one of the main points we could adopt here would be the set schedule for sittings. It could improve many aspects of our proceedings.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) told us earlier that we have now been debating Bill C-11 for fourteen days. It seems very long to him but for the opposition that must study a bill as badly drafted as Bill C-11, it is certainly not exaggerated. At almost each session we have a similar and as voluminous a bill amending the Income Tax Act; if those bills were better drafted, I think we could adopt them much faster.

In this long debate, I think that both main parties are to blame. First, as I said earlier, if this bill had been better drafted, its study would be easier. This government systematically refuses all suggestions made by the opposition. It rejects the amendments proposed by the opposition. Last week, my colleague from Rimouski (Mr. Allard) proposed an amendment extending the provision that allows any worker to claim a tax deduction of \$250 a year. Before, this exemption was \$150. We believe, and I think it is accepted by all workers, that this amount falls far short of meeting the substantial increase in transportation costs in Canada.

My colleague from Rimouski suggested to raise that amount to \$400. Yet, the majority party massively rejected this amendment. Other suggestions have been made in other areas but the same thing happens. The only amendments accepted by this government are its own. We should almost adopt them without any study, without any debate, particularly in a closed debate like this one.

Mr. Speaker, I think there was also some exaggeration on the other side. I often heard the Progressive Conservative Party repeat the same thing. Instead, I think that they might have made more precise suggestions and particularly a larger number of amendments to improve Bill C-11. Mr. Speaker, I have participated in the whole debate on Bill C-11 and I often asked myself certain questions. Everybody knows that the Liberal Party is recognized as a tax prone party but people know also that if the other party were in power, I mean the Progressive Conservative Party on the left side of Your Honour, it would probably be the same.

We should only remember the situation in 1962, when we had a Progressive Conservative government. We were facing the same economic problems. We had a frightening rate of unemployment. The inflation rate was going out of hand. The U.S. dollar was at a considerable premium over the Canadian dollar, which in effect was responsible for the Progressive Conservative defeat in 1962-63. And we are now back to the same position. For that reason, a number of people feel that no