

House. It ignores them. I understand the kind of pressure they get back in their constituencies when their constituents say, "You represent us. Why don't we hear you speaking up once in a while, making suggestions to the government by way of economic policy?"

We understand the pressure which is placed upon those who sit on the back benches. We realize how they feel about the limitation on opportunities available to express themselves on issues which come before the House. We do not expect very much more, because they are all sitting there squirming around, waiting to get up and debate this particular issue, to get their five or ten minutes in on this particular debate. They know that if they are good boys, chances will come their way and they may have an opportunity to advance to a parliamentary secretaryship or possibly even to a cabinet post. I say this simply by way of introduction to the main point I want to make.

I very much regret that the government is veering very severely from the traditional precepts and concepts of Liberalism. Anyone who observes parliament ought to sit down and watch this group of technocrats, so-called, who want to bring everything into parliament, speed it through and get rid of parliament—because it is a nuisance to the government, after all, having members stand and discuss the policies they bring forward. It is a nuisance to the cabinet to have a question period, for instance. But that is really what parliament is all about. The exercise of power without opposition is an unhealthy and unsatisfactory situation.

The most amazing thing about this motion is that there is no evidence of any inefficiency on the part of this chamber. All of us on this side who have participated in this debate have tried, as well as we are able, to make suggestions, to point out instances where we feel there are shortcomings in the legislation. We are responding to the cry which comes from our constituents to discuss economic matters. That is what the bulk of my mail is about. I do not know whether members on the other side receive that kind of representation from their constituents.

If this government had its way, we would talk for five or six minutes, look over a list of legislation and then retire from debate and they would merrily carry on in their own way. But do we not have a responsibility, as parliamentarians, to come forward and make suggestions to try to improve legislation? That is the role of a member of parliament. Although the members of the executive are part of this parliament, it is their responsibility to propose legislation and it is ours to criticize and make suggestions with regard to changes which we feel ought to be made.

As I began to say a few moments ago, the incredible part of all this is that the motion before us to terminate discussion on this bill does not reflect any inefficiency on the part of this chamber. It shows the helter-skelter way in which the cabinet has conducted its affairs and the way in which the business of the House generally has been conducted. It would be laughable if it were not a serious matter.

Time Allocation for Bill C-11

The budget was brought forward in March of this year. We finished the session, and the tax bills from that budget are only now being brought forward. One is led to ask: What kind of strategy is the government following? What kind of legislative program has it in mind, so that we can assess it in a responsible manner?

The answer, I am afraid, is that the government has no idea what it is doing. It goes from one bill to another for no apparent reason. Apparently they wait until Senator Keith Davey is ready to advise the Prime Minister as to the advantages of one course of action compared to another. It is the height of irresponsibility, in the first place, for the government to bring forward such an important piece of legislation as this at such a late date and then to talk about its urgency.

I notice that both the House leader and the deputy House leader have left the chamber, having made their little speeches. They are not very interested in what goes on now, because they know that members on the back benches over there will support any action which is proposed to them. But if there is some urgency about getting this bill through, let the House leader give us some indication of the legislation they wish to bring forward, so that we may know precisely what programs they have in mind and what measures they consider to be of consequence. But let them not bring forward a closure motion to shut down debate contrary to the wishes of most of the people in Canada who want us to discuss economic matters.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Government members laugh. Of course they laugh, because they have the tendency to reject anything which might be of consequence. The people want us to address ourselves to economic matters. If the members supporting the government feel that the economy is of secondary or tertiary consequence, they will continue to support the government. If they feel the rights of members of the House are minimal, of course they will support the government.

● (1632)

All I say to them is that we could conceivably have got through this debate. We are now wasting time on this motion. We could have had speakers dealing with the bill before us and be finished by the end of this week. We could have had a full discussion of the matter. This motion demonstrates, once again, the contempt of the government and the Minister of Finance for this House of Commons.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Stollery (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about the inconsistencies in the attitude of the opposition which is being ever more ridiculous with its abuse of the standing orders of the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, I have here the names of the members who have risen and expressed their views about Bill C-11 during the last nine days. In fact, twenty-seven Conservative members have talked. About fifty speeches have been made in the