

Routine Proceedings

the final right to have a say here. It has refused to call an election.

We have had some other issues as well. We have had the drug prices. We know the government's agenda is big business. It certainly is not the people in my riding. The government has come in and said: "Hey, we are going to get rid of compulsory licensing for drugs".

What does that mean to the average Canadian? It means that cheaper generic drugs will not be available to them. For the average senior citizen living in the province of Nova Scotia it means that the pharmacare program is less universally accessible because the costs have gone through the roof. But the government says: "Hey, this is good government".

We have talked about the fishery, not at length but we have talked a bit about the fishery. The Atlantic fishery is the reason this country was populated in the first place. The Europeans came in search of fish, in search of cod. For centuries now that cod stock has sustained not just the few people who live on the east coast of Canada, but it has sustained the nation.

After only a few short years this government has taken a resource that has been resilient, that has been a renewable resource and it has mismanaged it into a complete closure, a complete collapse. Tens of thousands of Atlantic Canadians no longer have pay cheques coming in. Their boats are tied up. They have no future because of this government.

We have had a government over the last few years that has brought this wonderful institution of Parliament into disrepute. The government opposite has constantly abused its majority in this Parliament. Closure or time allocation has been used 45 times which is probably more times than closure or time allocation has been used in the previous 100 years.

• (1955)

Each and every time an agenda item came forward in this place on which the government did not want real debate it took my right away to speak to it. More important, it took the away the right of Canadians to have their elected representatives speak on their behalf.

Then there is the big one which nobody will ever forgive or forget: its taxation policies. In the last number of years we have seen increased or new taxes 40 times,

billions of dollars coming in. None was more despised than the hated goods and services tax, which has caused a large segment of our industry to go underground.

In conclusion history may not judge this Parliament well. History will probably judge this Parliament to be a Parliament that broke the spirit of the Canadian public. However Canadians will have the final say and the Canadian people will be able to judge between the major parties in Canada and perhaps once again have some hope after the next general election in this country.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, these will presumably be my last words to the House of Commons, on the assumption that we will not be returning prior to the next election.

I am one of those many members who have chosen not to run again. I must confess as I approach what will probably be the last moment of my parliamentary career that I do so with a great deal of nostalgia and considerable sadness.

I am very proud to be a member of the House of Commons. The last 10 years have not always been easy and sometimes they have been very difficult. They have been difficult because we as a government have chosen to tackle some very difficult issues and because of the considerable amount of cynicism which exists within the public toward politicians.

I must confess I very much regret the presence of the latter and hope that future Parliaments will be able to address that and reduce the amount of cynicism which exists. I fear the end result will be the discouragement of many people who should be seeking public office from doing so. Quite frankly, I worry about that.

I hold each of my colleagues in very high regard. I spent most of my life studying political history so I felt when I came to Parliament that I was reasonably well prepared for what I would find here.

One of my pleasant surprises was to discover that the average member of Parliament, almost invariably every member of Parliament, works much harder than I had anticipated, gives more to his or her country than I had anticipated and makes greater sacrifices than I had ever understood. I come away with nothing but respect for those who have served in this Parliament and in the past.