

Time Allocation

it is an entirely normal procedure. However, it is not, and on behalf of millions of Canadians, I want to condemn the antidemocratic attitude being displayed by this Government today. That is what we should condemn, Mr. Speaker. We have the right to express our views. That is what we are here for. And if our Members should go too far, they will be judged accordingly. We stand behind what we do and what we say. So, now the Government has decided once again that the Opposition has had its say.

The Minister is, of course, in a terrible hurry to upgrade his image, since he has acted irresponsibly.

And besides showing how irresponsible it can be where the protection of public funds is concerned, this Government is now demonstrating how clumsy it can be by imposing closure. In addition, it shows how unacceptably arrogant it is by denying the rightfully elected Members of Parliament the right to express their views on such an important matter! Billions and billions of dollars have been spent, not to say wasted, because we do not have the parliamentary control we are clamouring for as elected representatives. For years, the government has turned a deaf ear to our representations whenever we suggested that a tighter control and a more effective management were required for these government agencies.

There is no need to go very far, Mr. Speaker. As evidence, I refer to one statement where it is clearly said that the Bill gives the Minister the discretionary power to occasionally exempt a corporation from having to table its projections before the appropriate Standing Committee or before Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, how can we honestly be expected in this House to give the Minister such powers after what we have seen? How can we accept the Government's invitation? How can we trust this Government after seeing such irresponsibility and mismanagement? The Minister now believes that he has the power to muzzle the duly elected representatives of Canadians, Mr. Speaker! This is what we must object to in my opinion. However, I have not seen many Government Members. Of course, they are in such a hurry. They are waiting anxiously for someone to do something about control. We would no longer have any control. Bill C-24 was introduced to bring about a comprehensive reform. It is a comprehensive Bill! I, myself, have comprehensive solutions to suggest, but the Government will not give us any comprehensive explanation about its proposals. This is why Members on this side want to speak out and express their views. It is because they also have things to say about this. Of course, the Government will reply: "You can do nothing else but criticize us!" Well, Mr. Speaker, this Government deserves criticisms and accusations. You only have to go out and talk to people to realize how vulnerable this Government has become because of its mismanagement and poor administration. This is why today we are blaming the Government for deciding to impose closure. It is altogether

unacceptable that the Government should succeed in muzzling us, Members of Parliament, myself personally and my colleagues, on issues as vitally important as the use of public funds, something which does not bother the Members on the other side that much. The importance of putting public funds to good use is beyond their understanding! The deficits are there to prove it. They prove mismanagement on the Government's part and those people deserve to see us rise in this House to condemn such manoeuvres and such plans.

For this reason, I hope that, based on the most elementary honesty, this Government will withdraw its motion so that we may finally see whatever true democracy it pretends to support, but which it was never capable of assuming because of its attitude and arrogance.

I am sorry if these words are a bit strong, but I truly deplore this attitude and the way this Parliament, and even more important this country, have been managed.

Mr. Pierre Gimaël (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Mines)): Mr. Speaker, I was delighted to hear the Hon. Member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle) make a long speech about the fact that the Government seems to want to prevent Opposition Members from speaking to the Bill before the House. Many Members on his side of the House have already spoken to the Bill. All Members are entitled to do so, and I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that I do not think he himself spoke to the Bill in his speech. Yes, indeed, all Members have the right to do so! What I would like to emphasize, and I do not think the Hon. Member mentioned this in his speech, is that the Government would like to see this Bill referred to the Standing Committee as soon as possible.

● (1640)

The place for clause by clause examination of Bills is in committee. I have several times been a member of the Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, the Committee to which this Bill will be referred. We examined some extremely important legislation, clause by clause, sitting for weeks on end, day after day. It will probably be the same with this Bill as well. If the Hon. Member would care to appear before the Committee with his colleagues, to explain his position . . . Perhaps we should explain to Canadians that in committee, important and less important aspects, main points and minor details of a Bill are examined, revised and amended before the legislation is reported back to the House for the final vote.

I found it rather difficult to follow the reasoning of the Hon. Member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle) who insisted that we keep the Bill in the House for a long time yet, after letting more than eighty Members speak to the Bill, and all this to keep the Bill from going to Committee, where the actual revision is done, on the basis of research by the research officers of each caucus or by individual members, the Departments involved and each corporation. This is where the Bill comes into its own, where it is amended to produce legislation that is accept-