

*Time Allocation***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE****ALLOCATION OF TIME TO CONSIDER REPORT STAGE AND THIRD READING OF BILL C-85**

The House resumed, from Tuesday, December 14, consideration of the motion of Mr. Whelan:

That, in relation to Bill C-85, an Act to establish a corporation called Canagrex to promote, facilitate and engage in the export of agricultural and food products from Canada, one sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of each of the report stage and the third reading stage of the Bill; and

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

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, up until this time I have witnessed the clear intent on the other side—

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Where are your friends? Have you no friends? There is nobody sitting near you.

Mr. Whelan:—that they have no intention of letting Bill C-85 move through a speedy reading.

An Hon. Member: You threatened to resign. That really frightened us.

Mr. Whelan: It has been said publicly in some quarters of this House that they will even present, if at all possible, a vote on third reading. For this reason, Madam Speaker, and because this legislation is so vital to the continued growth of agricultural export development in Canada, I neither apologize nor regret moving time allocation. I repeat Madam Speaker, time allocation. So many people have used the terminology "closure"—

An Hon. Member: It is the same thing.

Mr. Whelan: This is not closure. Time allocation in the Mother of Parliament is automatic with practically all Bills. There is an order put through in this form if they cannot agree, but 99 per cent of the time they agree on time allocation for second reading, committee stage, and so on, and then for bringing the legislation back into the House. It is all agreed before a Bill even moves into the House for second reading. One would think that the Government was creating something different, some kind of a monster, but time limitation is used in the Mother of Parliament practically all the time.

In Canada, one would almost think when we suggest moving into the twentieth century with parliamentary procedure that we are doing something that is undemocratic. It would be hard to convince anyone in the Mother of Parliament at Westminster that that was undemocratic.

Mr. Andre: Their Ministers resign when they transgress.

Mr. Whelan: They do this, as a matter of fact, every day, and when we suggest doing something like that here, it is looked upon as being something so different. Time allocation

functions in Britain and they have used the rule that they abide by about 99 times. What is regrettable is the frustration caused by the attempt to pass this important legislation which will assist agriculture export extension.

In recent weeks we have seen the Conservative Government of Ontario set time allocation on legislation vital to the public good. As I have said, in the British parliamentary system time allocation is a correct and needed mechanism, and we should use it here more often.

Someone accused me the other day—I heard the things they were saying while I was sitting here—of knowing nothing about democracy. I have been elected ever since I was 21 years of age. I used to run an election campaign every year. For someone to tell me that I know nothing about democracy is a little bit much; in fact, it is more than much. I have served on different boards. I have been re-elected to this House several times since 1962, in fact in every election up until 1980. To say that I know nothing of democracy, after seeing some of the things which are done in this House which leave something to be desired, is unjust.

• (1530)

I wonder if some Members understand how democracy works when we see what is attempted here. With regard to Canagrex, efforts to get agreement on this Bill have been stymied, mainly by the Official Opposition who made statements concerning the legislation that in most instances were completely unfounded. I am utterly appalled with regard to what they have said about Canagrex and what it is intended to do.

Some provincial Ministers of Agriculture have been quoted as to what they believe Canagrex is going to do. I suggest that they check the laws, rules and regulations in their provincial legislative assemblies governing their Crown corporations. Over half of them have the power to buy and sell. That is true in every Province in Canada.

In the letter which the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) wrote to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), he quoted the Auditor General. However, he did not quote him as far as he should have. The Auditor General is quite happy with what we are going to do about Canagrex. The Members of the Committee are aware of that. In fact, it was said several times in Committee.

In Committee, there were 14 amendments made to the 41 Clauses of the Bill. It has been said that this Minister of Agriculture is uncompromising, that he will not bend, he is inflexible, he is stubborn, he is bull-headed. How often have those kinds of concessions been made? If Hon. Members want to quote the Auditor General, let us hear what he had to say about the Department. Talking about the Department of Agriculture he said:

We found no serious deficiencies in the Department's planning and management activities.