

*Extension of Sittings*

The second is the amount of time and effort that all Members of the House, both in government and in opposition, have invested in legislation presently on the Order Paper at either committee stage, second reading or report stage.

The third reason is the importance of certain issues before the House and country which could not be foreseen when we laid out our agenda.

The fourth is the importance of the free trade initiative.

The fifth is the tactics of the Senate.

The sixth is the inflammatory comments and the delaying tactics of the Opposition.

First is our agenda. When we took office as a Government we decided to make some changes in accordance with the mandate given to us as a majority Government by the Canadian people. We sought to do and we sought to undo. We instituted a simplified approach to employment so that we could raise employment. We slashed spending. We slashed the deficit. We reduced the Public Service by some 15,000 people, mainly by attrition. We privatized Crown corporations. We enacted tougher laws dealing with prostitution, impaired driving, and the environment. We undid the National Energy Program which so unfairly crippled western Canada.

The list goes on and on. We deliberately set difficult goals for ourselves as a Government and we make no apologies for being ambitious because we believe Canada needs legislatures with ambition for their country.

This Parliament, the 33rd Parliament, has been one of the most productive in history to date. By coincidence, the 1974-1979 Parliament, which sat for 54 months, and the 1980-1984 Parliament, which sat for 51 months, both passed 177 Bills. This Parliament has passed 204 Bills in 44 months. In other words, if you deal with just the raw numbers, this Parliament has been 15 per cent more productive to date than previous Parliaments although it sat for much less time.

**Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Then why sit in the summer?

**Mr. Lewis:** I reiterate, we make no apologies for being ambitious as a Government.

Let us look at the amount of time and effort invested by Members of the House on all sides in the legislation currently before us. We wish to send the following legislation at the very least on to the Senate for consideration. We have Bills with respect to national parks, the proceeds of crime, the Official Languages Act, lobbyists' registration, the very important multiculturalism Bill, the privatization of Eldorado, or divestiture at any rate, amendments to the Canada Labour Code and the privatization of Air Canada. As well, we want to complete the reply to the Senate with respect to the amendments to the immigration Bill and the emergency refugee legislation.

The debate on those Bills has been spirited. We passed them at second reading. We have heard witnesses. There have been amendments in committee. There are amendments at report stage. I suggest we would all be remiss in our duty if we did not see that as much as possible of this legislation goes through to the conclusion of third reading and on to the Senate prior to the conclusion of this sitting. We suggest we owe that duty not only to Members of Parliament but to the witnesses and the people who sent us here.

The third item I referred to was those items which could not be foreseen when we laid out our agenda. I refer specifically to two things. First, the decision by the Supreme Court of Canada to declare the abortion law, which had been in existence since 1969, unconstitutional. The second matter was the Senate's decision to suggest amendments to the Meech Lake Accord, which requires the House to debate the matter for a second time and resolve once again the House's position. We feel it is our duty as elected representatives to debate those two items before we rise.

Fourth, we have the importance of the free trade initiative. The House knows, the country knows, that on January 2 the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) signed an historic free trade agreement with the U.S. Legislation to implement that agreement had to be drafted and drafted properly. It had to be proceeded with at an appropriate time. We set about to draft that legislation, and whether or not Members opposite are in favour of the initiative, I think they would agree that, having taken that initiative, they would want that Bill to be drafted properly and as closely as possible to implement what was agreed between the parties. That is the issue before the House on Bill C-130. Does that Bill properly implement the agreement?

We believe the product is sound. My colleagues opposite disagree. That is fair. That is what democracy is all about, debating the issue, and we want to complete second reading of that legislation before we rise for the summer.

● (1530)

The fifth item to which I referred was the Senate. In completing our legislative agenda we have a further complication with which to deal, that is, the Senate. From 1980 to 1984 the Senate never had a sober second thought, at least not one that came back to the House of Commons. It was only in this Parliament that I and Members who were elected with me in 1979 found out how the reply from the Senate worked because it started to send legislation back to us for reconsideration. That never happened during the two previous long Parliaments when the sober second thoughts were presumably being delivered in another manner.

As well, the Senate discontinued what I respectfully suggest was a very useful procedure, that is, the prestudy of Bills. When the Conservatives came into government the Liberal dominated Senate suddenly decided not to prestudy Bills. Fortunately it has prestudied parts of the free trade issue and I