

*Extension of Sitings*

● (1300)

This is simply a place where you put the plug in and turn on the machine in order to get the tyranny of the majority answered as quickly and as efficiently as possible. It is the type of thing that Mussolini used to say: "Let's get the trains running on time". Now we have the Parliamentary Secretary saying: "Let's have Parliament work according to our timetable".

The Parliamentary Secretary and his cohorts, colleagues, and masters did not say that the reason we are having this debate has nothing to do with the Opposition trying to defend the rights of Parliament. It has to do with a Government that is insisting that the trade legislation, the most important Bill in the history of this country, be passed by January 1, the Government's deadline. As a result Government Members were the ones who set the timetable, set the motions to say that we will not allow Parliament to function in its normal and proper way. They are the ones who say that there will not be committee hearings so that all those industries that are presently being closed down and shut down as a result of the impending Free Trade Agreement will have an opportunity to be heard by this House and by this Parliament.

That comes as no surprise to those of us who were here for the last four years, because we realize that the whole formula of the Conservative Party is to make sure that people not be heard. Going back to 1985 the whole thesis of the trade agreement was: "Don't tell the people what is going on. Keep it hidden, keep it under wraps, and keep it under a blanket, so in that way we will be able to fool them".

They almost succeeded, until we got to the election and people all of a sudden began to understand that the agreement was more than a commercial agreement and that it would affect us in many ways. There is not one Conservative Member of Parliament who was not bruised when going door to door by questions from individual constituents who said: "You did not tell me what it was about. You did not tell me that it was going to change the way foreign investment comes in. You did not tell me that it was going to affect the way in which regional development programs can be applied".

All of a sudden Tory candidates were faced with a barrage of questions. For the first time Canadians were stating that this thing was a time bomb and that it was going to change the country. The only way government Members overcame that was to return to the old tactics and swamp the country with a tidal wave of propaganda,

paid for by their friends in big business, to ensure that they could hang on by their fingernails for another week or two until the election was over. That is the way that they succeeded. They have learned nothing.

An election is not simply an exercise of raw power and how many seats the Government has. An election is also an exercise of listening. An election is being at the street corner, around the kitchen table, and at the doorstep listening to what people have to say. Canadians were clearly stating that they saw serious flaws in this agreement and that they had serious concerns about it. Yet, did the Minister of Trade in introducing this Bill or the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) in setting the timetable give one, single concession to those concerns? Were they listening at all? Did we hear anything from the Minister of Trade, the Prime Minister, or the rest of that phalanx that the Canadian people have some deep-seated anxieties that deserve to be listened to? Let us bring in a Bill that responds to that. Let us change the Bill from the old C-130 to respond to those concerns. They only changed one thing. That was the date of implementation.

The Deputy House Leader, the House Leader, the Parliamentary Secretary, and all the others are now introducing into the House the most Draconian usurpation of the parliamentary rules in the history of Canada in order to meet a January 1 timetable that the Government has stated is not important. What an incredible contradiction.

The one thing that was changed in the entire Bill was the taking out of the January 1 deadline. If it was so important, why was it not left in? If it was absolutely essential to the agreement, why was it not left there? No, the Government took it out. Now we have the hijacking of Parliament in order to meet a timetable that is no longer important to the Government. Something is wrong there. Somehow the logic escapes me. Perhaps Government Members have a basic sense of masochism. They like twisting and turning the rules of Parliament for the sake of doing it. Perhaps this type of parliamentary terrorism is something that appeals to their basic psyche. Perhaps that is the basic character of members of the modern Conservative Party. Perhaps they do not like Parliament working by its normal rules. Perhaps they do not like rules, because after all it is a little awkward to have to come here and answer questions and deal with debate. Maybe we should just turn off the lights forever and turn on the computer, or have the Deputy House Leader do his high jinks.