

Government Orders

did something in a deliberate fashion and he got fired. He chose to be unemployed by his misconduct.

• (1625)

The fallacious arguments from the opposition just do not hold water. I hope that people will look at this and read the legislation. This is not closure, it is time allocation. If we did not have time allocation these people on the opposite benches would be standing up day after day going through the same fallacious arguments that they are going through now. We have heard them ever since the legislation was introduced into the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite has just said this was not closure.

[*English*]

That is about the same as telling us they did not use the meat axe, they just used the broad axe. That is much better and Canadians should be relieved at that. Well, they are not.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, if someone was drowning, what would you throw him or her, a lifebuoy or an anchor? What this government is doing is just that, weighing down the neediest Canadians. Canadians who need a lifebuoy are being dragged down toward the bottom by the very government that caused the massive unemployment that we are faced with now in this country. The government intends to take away about \$2.4 billion from unemployed Canadians.

[*English*]

If that was not enough, the government was planning—get a load of this—to set up a toll-free line to denounce suspected cheaters of the program. I guess the toll-free line would have gone this way: 1-800-RAT-FINK. I suppose that was the number that the government was planning.

Yes, it was true. The minister said it. The minister confessed and two days later in the House of Commons he recanted.

An hon. member: No.

Mr. Boudria: Of course he recanted. He had to recant on many things, but such is life. However, Canadians will remember this minister.

Mr. Shields: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I am sure that my hon. friend would not want to deliberately mislead the House, but the facts are that this was something that was created in the bureaucracy as a suggestion to the minister that the minister never accepted and that was the 1-800 number or the RAT-FINK line as my hon. friend has indicated.

It was never the intention of this government to install a line and that member over there knows that. He knows that if we look at the record it did not come from the minister and it did not come as a policy. It came up from the civil servants through the bureaucracy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, this is not a point of order, nor a matter of privilege. It is not even a valid point that the hon. member opposite is raising. He knows full well that it took the minister two or three days before backing down. By not saying anything at the time, the minister in fact agreed to this RAT-FINK telephone line. Meanwhile, Canadians are not getting the help—

Mr. Robitaille: Mr. Speaker, as you know, loads of suggestions are regularly made to our ministers. I think it is only normal that they should take the time to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The Chair is willing to show some tolerance, but this is a matter of opinion and, strictly speaking, it does not qualify as a point of order.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, meanwhile, there are groups of workers in my riding who care for those who are unemployed. I am referring in particular to the Hawkesbury unemployment action center run by Mr. Guy Bélisle. My hon. colleagues know how fond I am of Hawkesbury. I mention it often in my speeches in this House.