

put at the report stage of the bill gives us an opportunity to address ourselves to the bill in a general way.

● (1602)

I know Your Honour looks sceptical when I say that, and I am not unmindful of your intervention last night, but I think you will agree with me on reflection that if you read the provisions of the amendment now before the House, you will find that it does give us the same latitude as if we were in committee of the whole on clause 1 of the bill, which in and of itself is the same kind of free-wheeling debate as could take place at second reading or at third reading.

But this amendment at this time gives us an opportunity which is new, because we know as of today, as of the latest intervention by the minister, that there is to be an allocation of time, the imposition of Standing Order 75C, or closure. It is closure—a rose by any other name. We know that tomorrow the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Cullen) will stand in his place at three o'clock and he will move, under the provisions of Standing Order 75C, an allocation of time on this bill which will terminate this debate on the report stage and third reading stage as of a certain hour on a certain day.

No matter what we say or do, nothing can change that. All we can do is to voice our opposition. I think we always have to oppose the arbitrary use of closure, and we can do that within the provisions of the Standing Order for a period of two hours. We can make ten-minute interventions over a period of two hours, and I have no doubt that we will take full advantage of that two-hour debate to talk about the mismanagement of the business of the House which brought us to this unhappy impasse. So tomorrow, then, to all intents and purposes, will be lost to us as a day to discuss the report stage of this bill and some of the important amendments before us. I say "some of the amendments" because not all the amendments are important. Indeed, it can be argued that some of them are frivolous; but some of them are very important.

I think it is rather interesting that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), the government House leader, was not here and did not do what is customarily done by the one who is responsible for the management of the House, and that is stand in his place and give notice of the motion which was given today by the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Indeed, the President of the Privy Council was not in the House and you could almost read between the lines. You could almost hear the minister saying: You got yourself into this mess, Bud; now get yourself out of it because I will not do your dirty work for you. I could almost read that into what happened here in the House today.

The reason the President of the Privy Council would feel that way, being the good parliamentarian that he is and knowing the way the debate has been unfolding on this bill, is that he probably examined the record of the debate yesterday and found that not one government backbencher, not two government backbenchers, but three government backbenchers participated in this debate in addition to the minister. I suggest that the government has contributed to this debate as much as

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any other party in the House. I have not made a head count of the NDP; perhaps they had four speakers. Certainly they had no more than four, and the government had four, but we had only one speaker until we saw what was happening. Then we said that obviously, if this is the way it is going to be, we are going to participate in this debate. If the government is going to allow its backbenchers to suck and blow at the same time, which is what they did yesterday because the three hon. members opposite who participated in the debate all spoke against the bill, then we can take part in the debate also.

The hon. member for South Western Nova (Miss Campbell) did the most magnificent job of gobbling herself up whole—as my friend, the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) would say, "guttled" herself up—because she voted for the bill in committee, and is on record as doing so since it was a recorded vote. Yesterday, she stood in her place and took her 20 minutes in this debate to express her opposition to this bill. I would defy any member of the House, including the minister, to read anything else into her speech except her great opposition to this bill.

If we go back a little bit, we will find the intervention by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lapointe), who also spoke in opposition to the bill. All I can say for him is that he was not in the committee. I do not believe he participated in the committee and certainly he did not vote for the bill in the committee. Nevertheless, I do not know how he can reconcile his position as a junior member of the government with standing in his place in the House and opposing a bill sponsored by the government which he has taken an oath to serve. How can he reconcile that with his speech last night? That is for the hon. member and his own conscience.

It is well for us to take a look at what he said. He spoke about some of the provisions of the bill being commendable, and then he said:

—and I think that if this bill could be fairly applied for all Canadians I would not have any objection to support it.

Then he went on to state his objections to the bill and we have heard them over and over again. They are based on the 48 UI districts across the country and the fact that the provisions of the bill will apply inequitably, unfairly and unjustly. So it is right that we should be opposed to the bill. I will be watching very closely and very carefully to see how the hon. member votes when we get to third reading of the bill, and when we vote on some of the amendments dealing with the very objections that he raised. I suggest both to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport and to the hon. member for South Western Nova, who is a former parliamentary secretary, that we will be watching them. It is too late for them to take the powder now because they are on the record as being opposed to this bill.

Then, Mr. Speaker, there was the third intervention yesterday. What can I say about the hon. member for Hochelaga (Mr. Lavoie)?