

something more tangible than just say it is a lot of money. I suppose if I were to relate it to a commodity, such as cars, I could figure out that for \$14 billion we could buy 1,400,000 cars at \$10,000 each. In other words, you could buy a car for every man, woman and child in greater Vancouver. That gives you some idea of the magnitude of the amount of money the government is seeking. As soon as you begin relating that figure to something tangible you are struck by the enormity of the amount the government is asking for in this borrowing bill. Is it any wonder that members feel obligated to ask about the bill, to debate the matter, and to raise it over and over again? Is it any wonder that members are perturbed that this amount will drive up our already unmanageable national debt? It will drive up the amount of money which flows continually out of this country for interest rates on loans already outstanding. I have to ask myself what is it about this bill which makes the Liberals so reluctant to allow members to debate it in full. The answer is probably because it is an embarrassing bill—

**An hon. Member:** It's a cover-up!

**Miss MacDonald:**—and because it is a bill which points to the sorry state of the government's debt. It is a bill which points to the Liberal government's inability to hold on to the purse strings. It points as well to the lack of respect which the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) have for the taxpayer's dollar. No wonder they do not want to debate it. No wonder they are invoking closure. They cannot stand the heat of having their economic policies and their economic record brought up time and time again. They are running out of arguments to support what really is in essence insupportable.

No doubt one of the reasons they are invoking closure is that they cannot get anybody on that side to stand up and say anything positive about the government's economic record. Closure is a pretty harsh measure to invoke when members are genuinely trying to figure out what are the government's economic priorities. That is a difficult job at any time, Mr. Speaker, but in a period of recession, such as we have today, surely the government should be willing to listen to suggestions of how it should better order its priorities to get the best possible value it can from its dollars.

● (1650)

We know the government does not like to refer to what is going on here today as closure. It would rather refer to it as time allocation under Standing Order 75C. We know only too well and they know only too well that closure does not smell very sweet. However, closure under any name you want to give it, no matter how you attempt to pour perfume on it, will not make it any sweeter. Every time this government introduces closure as it has done, it chews away at the very foundations of our parliamentary system.

In closing, I would like to say that the group opposite is like a bunch of termites or death watch beetles eating away at the basic underpinnings of this structure. What they do not seem to realize or appreciate is that this kind of sustained abuse to

which they are subjecting Parliament not only demeans and degrades Parliament, but in the end, if they continue in this way, will destroy it.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Gingras (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the motion introduced by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) pursuant to Standing Order 75C is to limit debate on Bill C-59. The House has been discussing this bill since January 30. Furthermore, it will be considered in committee and must be approved by March 31 for the government to proceed with its 1981-82 borrowing program.

Mr. Speaker, the House has 40-odd bills and resolutions to consider. In the last year, the President of the Privy Council has done a very efficient job as government House leader in an attempt to make up for the time lost during Parliament's sabbatical leave which lasted from May, 1979, to February 1980. Mr. Speaker, these are historical times. I am happy to be living at this point in our history, when we are dealing with an energy policy and a Canadian Constitution with a charter of rights and an amending formula.

At present, the House has 32 standing, special or joint committees whose purpose is to relieve the House of its workload. I have here the Standing Orders of the House of Commons, and I want to draw the attention of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) to the fact that there is a vast difference between Standing Orders 33 and 75, the latter being divided into three parts. Under Standing Order 75A, there can be an agreement to allot time for a debate. Standing Order 75B deals with the situation where the majority of members come to an agreement in respect to a debate. The present motion is proposed pursuant to Standing Order 75C which applies when no agreement has been reached on time allotment. The President of the Privy Council gave notice yesterday that we would be debating this motion today.

Here we are, Mr. Speaker, participating in a debate which could have been avoided if the opposition did not want to appear on television at all costs. I think the proceedings of all 32 committees should be broadcast to enable the Progressive Conservatives to say "Hello, mom." on television. We saw this morning when the Constitution committee proceedings were no longer televised that the Progressive Conservatives completely changed positions. Those same hon. members refuse to shorten the speeches. If at least their speeches were entirely relevant, but they are always harping on the same string, but I shall not name anybody.

Mr. Speaker, we were elected to the Canadian Parliament to make it work. We were also elected to represent our constituents in our respective ridings.

**Mr. Kilgour:** Do it!

**Mr. Gingras:** We need time to do that. We have to update our Standing Orders. An efficient way to begin updating our