

Government Orders

The legislative committee must take care on this bill. However there is very little to be said at second reading except for some of the points that I wish to make. I think I have unlimited time. I do not know if I will go on for a day or two or three. I think it important that we place certain things on the record which are of some importance to those of us on this side.

We will probably want to have additional speakers as we progress into the committee stage. Then it comes back from the committee on the report stage and then we go into third reading. Probably before Christmas there will be an opportunity for us to meet in this House and make a final adjudication on Bill C-35.

This is a breach of the traditions of this House. Mr. Speaker, I am sure you would want me as an individual and as an opposition House leader to stand in this place and attempt to support the important traditions of this House, which we believe to be very important.

There are a number of amendments. One of the amendments that I wish to draw to the attention of the House, and I am sure the minister opposite would want to concur if not necessarily with the amendment itself but perhaps with my remarks following this particular amendment.

Section 9, headed the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Act, says:

9. The heading preceding section 21 of the *Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Act* is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

And then:

10. Subsections 21(2) and (3) of the said Act are repealed and the following substituted therefor:

(2) The President shall, on or before September 15, 1993 and every five years thereafter, submit to the Minister a comprehensive report, in addition to the annual report of the Agency, providing an evaluation of all activities in which the Agency was involved and the impact those activities have had on regional disparity.

I am somewhat surprised when I hear the Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Minister of Public Works from Central Nova, and the Minister of Employment and Immigration from the province of New Brunswick refer to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency as being—as they say in news reports and in their public musings with small business and everyone else—

the panacea to correct the regional inequalities and disparities within the region.

I have to ask myself if it is such a positive vehicle for positive change why do you only want to tell us every five years? Why would you not want to tell us every year about the wonderful workings, the tremendous contribution of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency? Why? Why would you wait five years? Perhaps the minister cannot prepare a report on an annual basis. There is an annual report. I will read the bill again for your understanding, Mr. Speaker, because I know that you are as concerned as I am with the efficiency and effectiveness of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The bill says:

The President shall, on or before September 15, 1993 and every five years thereafter, submit to the Minister a comprehensive report, in addition to the annual report of the Agency.

An hon. member: Maybe it is not as good as they have been telling us.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, did you hear that? One of my colleagues said: Perhaps the reason why they would not want to do it, say every second year or every third year, is that they do not have anything positive to report.

That would be very different. That is very different from what we are hearing from the Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, and the Minister of Public Works. I do not know who to believe.

I want to say that I am leaning very heavily toward the comments of my colleague who happens to reside in the great province of Prince Edward Island.

I am leaning. I might get there. I might have a conclusion which will be obvious to each and every one of us in the House.

Just the other day the 1991 annual report of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency was released and it said: "During 1990 the economy of the Atlantic provinces hosted a surprisingly good performance, despite the recession". Wasn't that wonderful? I did not hear from the minister. I did not hear from the member for Central Nova.

I want to talk about the member for Central Nova, the Minister of Public Works, because he is a leading figure in Nova Scotia politics. He is a dear and close personal friend of the premier of Nova Scotia, the hon. Don