

Time Allocation

we as a country want to go. Yet here is a Government allocating time for debate after only seven hours. I am sure that if you were on the floor of this House instead of in the chair you, too, would get up and protest this abuse of majority, this denial of freedom of speech. That is what the Conservatives did in opposition over much less important clauses at times. I am sure that if some of them had the intellectual honesty to get up and speak their minds they would say the same thing today that they said some seven or eight years ago.

Mr. Tobin: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, in view of the remarks made by the Hon. Member who just spoke, and given the presence in the House of the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart), I would like to move:

That the Hon. Member for Simcoe South be now heard.

Mr. Rodriguez: I second it.

Mr. Hawkes: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I think you may find unanimous consent for the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart) to speak.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Is the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart) rising?

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think that what has been happening in this Chamber in the last few weeks and months is well known to all Canadians. We have seen stonewalling tactics. The fact is that the important Bills coming from this Party are not the type of Bills I was referring to at that time. Not in the least.

Mr. Tobin: You are turning red.

Mr. Stewart: Nothing like your tie. Are you a cousin of David Peterson?

This Government has provided more good legislation in three and a half years than was ever put before this House in its history. Right now there is a backlog of the most important legislation that Canadians will ever see. We believe in the free enterprise system. We believe that Air Canada can be run properly in the free enterprise system. It will be, too, whether the socialists like it or not.

There are certain times when time allocation is a necessity. Such was not the case when I made this statement. This Government is dedicated to bringing forward over the next few months the policies that the Canadian people were promised. We are going to fulfil that promise regardless of the stonewalling.

Mr. Hawkes: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, the Government would like to acknowledge the generosity of the Opposition in putting an extra government Member up, but I think I am the next to speak.

Mr. Nystrom: No, you alternate.

Mr. Gauthier: You had your turn. It is our turn.

Mr. Tobin: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, if you are going to recognize me for debate I will carry on with my speech. Otherwise, I raise the point of order that the Hon. Member has spoken and it is now our turn.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) is recognized on debate.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Madam Speaker, I found it fascinating that a Member who went on forever six or seven years ago on the principle of parliamentary democracy, who spoke with great vehemence, great passion, and right from the bowels of his being about this cruel, unparliamentary, undemocratic gesture, this kind of motion, could only speak a minute or two in defence of the present Government. A few years ago he had to be restrained. The Sergeant-at-Arms had to be brought in to sit him in his place because he said he was going to stand and fight the battle for democracy, to prevent this kind of scurrilous, terrible motion being presented to the House of Commons. I have never seen such a spectacle of a Member standing and swallowing himself whole—a tragedy, not only for democracy, but for the Hon. Member who finds himself sitting in this House seven years later almost to the day when the same kind of motion was moved. Now he, suffering the threat of the lash of the whip of government Members across his back, had to stand and swallow himself whole.

I offer my sympathy, having witnessed the spectacle of a man melt before us in this House, having to swallow his words, having to take back everything he stood for seven years ago. I apologize for even forcing him to his feet to speak today.

The sad reality is that the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart), who managed to bleat out a few words to try to justify his position, is unfairly targeted in this House today. There he sits next to his colleague, beaming, the redness in his face but a glow, like a beacon of embarrassment. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, being seen from all parts of Canada. The tragedy is he is but one, because he is surrounded by his colleagues, many of whom have made the same kind of speech but who were not unfortunate enough today to be singled out.

What did the Hon. Member say? He said he stands behind this legislation. He stands behind the Government. He stands behind this measure to bring the guillotine down. You can hear the jack-boots beating in the background, echoing off the walls of this great democratic institution, coming to shut us up. What did he say? He said:

If we lose freedom of speech, as we have started to lose freedom in our economy and as did Petrofina, we will lose individual freedom, because that is what happens when economic freedom is lost. If we lose freedom of speech by closure, the right to oppose, the right to criticize, the right to scrutinize public business and public accounts, what reason is there to sit in this House of Commons?