

Government Orders

nothing else to put forward". If the government does have other priorities, where are they? Where is the broadcasting bill, the bill governing transfer payments to the provinces, the bill on MPs conflict of interest, the proposed OSLO oil sands legislation, the proposed legislation concerning criminal records, and environmental assessment? Where is that legislation? What is the rush with the Petro-Canada bill?

I think this minister has *carte blanche* because the government does not have another agenda. The government wants to turn out the lights at this stage. But the bill will be back, Mr. Speaker, the bill will be back. But the government wants to turn out the lights now and preclude members from making their positions known to this Parliament and to their constituents. I object strongly, my constituents object strongly, and the opposition objects strongly.

Mr. Jack Shields (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I would like for a moment to discuss why it is necessary for this government to use time allocation in the House to get very necessary legislation through.

I would like to answer my hon. friend who suggests that there is no other legislation to bring forward and that is why we are using time allocation. It would seem to me that if this government did not have legislation to put before the House, it clearly would not use time allocation, because all time allocation does is shorten up the time the bill is in the House. All we are doing is pushing forward the agenda so other bills can come into the House.

An hon. member: Shocking.

Mr. Shields: We hear comments that it is shocking and accusations about our government and the use of the rules of the House to shorten debate in order to bring legislation to a conclusion in this House.

Mr. Speaker, here are some facts of which my hon. friends might not be aware. If they look back to 1980 to 1984, time allocation motions were used in this House 25 times. From 1984 to 1988, time allocation has been used 20 times. If we consider closure motions, from 1980 to 1984, there have been two closure motions used. From 1984 to 1988, two closure motions were used. We do

admit that in 1988 time allocation was used more often. That is because the opposition's tactics forced us, on this side of the House, to use closure. The opposition is no longer content to use legitimate debate and then a negative vote to show its opposition to legislation that the government has brought before the House. It wants to force the government to use closure at every opportunity. Somehow this gives them evidence of being strongly opposed to any legislation or points of view.

This was demonstrated very clearly during the free trade debate. The free trade passed this House, it went to the Senate close to election time. The government had an election on free trade that was passed by the people of Canada who elected this government to implement its program. The government brought in free trade legislation. The opposition then forced the government, after the new government was formed in 1988, to use closure on free trade three times. That should tell everyone in this House of Commons and the people of Canada exactly what the opposition is up to and what its *modus operandi* is. All it wants to do is create problems.

I support this legislation for a number of reasons. When the formation of Petro-Canada was first debated, I can remember the critic from the NDP standing up and asking why we should be forming a Petro-Canada oil company. He said that what the government should be doing is nationalizing one of the biggies, was the word that was used. Let the government nationalize Imperial Oil. It shows know where they come from. They would like to nationalize all the oil companies right across the country. I hear my hon. friend from Halifax saying the government should nationalize these big oil companies. I wonder if she really believes that that is the policy of the Liberal Party.

Let us look at Petro-Canada and the problems that it faces today. First, it has not discovered any resources. However, the government has a good inventory of the resources that are available in the Northwest Territories in the Canada Lands and so on. Petro-Canada needs to increase its capital base. The government has a chance of increasing that capital base by one of two ways. One, to allow Canadians through the regular system of investment, that is investment in direct share ownership into the company, or the government can turn around with