

## S.O. 75c

borrow some \$14 billion. Now to justify our action and our attitude, may I remind the House that in recent years, when debating bills to authorize the government to borrow certain sums of money, more often than not the government has had to resort to that procedure so as to be able to make progress.

*[English]*

Yesterday I inadvertently mentioned that under the former government a motion under Standing Order 75c had been introduced dealing with the borrowing authority bill. I was wrong and I apologize for that. What I had in mind was the income tax bill when they used 75c. It was a slight error and I just want to correct the record. Let me state clearly that at that time the opposition, of which I was a member, collaborated very much with the government of the day. My hon. colleague, the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton will recall that during the debate on Bill C-10, the borrowing authority bill, only three and a half days were spent on the second reading stage, while this year already five days have been devoted to the second reading stage of the bill. That is why, failing to find that kind of collaboration on this bill, we are forced to send it to committee as soon as possible in order to clear the stage for the House to deal with other urgent and pressing business.

*[Translation]*

Mr. Speaker, I was saying that on the basis of the most recent precedents it has been current practice to limit debate on the type of legislation which is controversial and which generally prompts the opposition parties to object strenuously, rightly or wrongly. In any event, notice was given and this motion was introduced for Bill C-7 in 1978. As I have just said it was not the case in 1979, but the same thing happened for a bill to amend the Income Tax Act and the Progressive Conservative Party, then in office, had to resort to Standing Order 75c, something which we did not do in the case of our bill to amend the income tax legislation. And in 1980, this was Bill C-30, after five days on second reading, we were also forced to serve notice and introduce this motion.

So why have recourse to that procedure as we are doing now? First of all, there is the practice I have just mentioned which seems to become a tradition whereby the opposition parties, excluding the Liberals when they were in opposition, feel the need to block passage, until S.O. 75c is used, of a bill authorizing the government to borrow money. It would appear that a practice has developed whereby an opposition party is reluctant to agree to a given period of time, even a long one, before referring a bill of this kind to committee.

Again I say that is done rightly or wrongly, but I am fully at ease to act as I am doing now because we feel that practice is unjustifiable. It seems to me that after five days of debate on second reading of a bill such as this one, knowing that the bill will be studied in Committee of the Whole and then come back on the floor of the House for the report and third reading stages, it seems unacceptable to me that a government which

wants to discharge its full responsibilities should tolerate an even longer debate on second reading of a bill.

Mr. Speaker, here we are in 1981 and once again we are facing, and I repeat—

**Mr. Kilgour:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pinard:** Hear, hear. This is the year of the birth of my colleague's baby. I congratulate him. He was telling me yesterday how proud he was to be the father of a new baby born in 1981. The earth continues to turn, hon. members continue to have children, but we also continue to have too much work. We inherited a situation due to two elections within one year. Hon. members will recall May, 1979, and February, 1980, not even twelve months between those two elections, and during that time Parliament was practically paralysed and unable to meet its legislative obligations. Despite the fact that Parliament could not prevent work from piling up, the opposition still continues to enjoy all the benefits to which it is entitled under the rules of the House, and all I need do is point out to the 25 days allotted under the Standing Order governing the business of supply. The opposition is still entitled, and that is normal, to its six days of debate on the budget, to eight days on the throne speech, and also, as we saw before the holidays, to six days for two proclamations concerning certain sections of the Petroleum Administration Act.

I am saying all this because if on one hand Parliament is faced with an exceptionally heavy work load as a result of two elections within one year and of our ever greater contemporary obligations to intervene in various sectors of our society, be it energy, the economy or the Constitution, in spite of that additional load, fully explained and quite justified, the opposition still continues to enjoy the same privileges which take up so much of the time of the House. So we are all the more justified to act this way, Mr. Speaker, as we have on the Order Paper 40-odd bills which deserve to be studied during this session, as we have indicated in the Speech from the Throne.

For all these reasons, this action on the part of the government, in its wish to make this institution more effective seems logical to me and not an abuse especially when the opposition acts in this way for political or other reasons. I believe that a responsible government should put some order in the proceedings of the House, and that after a reasonable delay—I respectfully submit that is the case here as I have looked at second reading debates on similar bills, and I have noted that they have lasted an average of five days while, as we all know, after this motion, there will be an additional day of debate, which will mean six to seven days of debate at the second reading stage—we should keep to the average length of time spent on debates on similar bills in the past, and I think that no one could say that we are being arrogant or that we do not respect the right of members to express themselves on such bills. Once again, and I have spoken of this often, I know that my colleague from Nepean-Carleton agrees with me in this