

Time Allocation

There were 11 Conservative back-benchers, including the Minister speaking on this Bill at second reading, and there were six Liberal Members, and six New Democratic Members. Is that a filibuster on second reading? No. This Bill was flawed and the Government knows it. We tried to correct it in committee. There were 40 witnesses who were given half an hour to present their points and arguments to improve the Bill. It was railroaded. There were three and a half days in committee from August 24 on. The Bill was reported back to the House on September 15. There were 13 amendments ruled in order. There was one amendment accepted by the Government. On September 22, two days ago, we started third reading of the Bill, which is the last phase of any legislative process. There was one speaker from each Party, then the Government rose and gave notice that it will invoke Standing Order 117, and limit debate to one additional day.

Yet government Members have the gall to rise today and call this a filibuster. I hope that the Member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) will grow and mature a little before he uses the type of silly arguments that he was using this morning. Regressive legislation; indeed it is regressive legislation, distorted legislation, unresponsive.

Come the next election I hope the Member for Calgary West will self-destruct with the nonsense he has put to us today. The arguments he put were as silly as I have ever heard. He said that the Senate will filibuster and block the Bill. The Senate said no such thing. The Senate has not had the Bill yet, it is still here, so it cannot possibly know when it will get the Bill, unless the Government has decided once and for all to bully and bulldoze its way through and get the Bill to the Senate next week sometime. Until the Bill is there, how can the Government tell the media that it is filibustering and that it will block the Bill? I suspect that the least the Senate would want to do is to spend as much time as the House of Commons has, that is, three days at second reading and possibly some good committee work where they would hear these 40 witnesses who were against the Bill. There was not one witness before the committee who was in favour of the Bill, not one.

• (1240)

Mr. Allmand: And they were only given half an hour to respond.

Mr. Gauthier: Yes, the Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand) says they were only given half an hour. That is true. They had half an hour to comment on a very important Bill, one which may have direct consequences on the future of our children. I would like to talk about the mentality this Government has developed over the last four years. It is called a jackboot mentality, and I think it is appropriate. Government members are running the show like dictators. If they do not have it their way, they bulldoze everything, call time allocation or closure in order to put through whatever legislation they have. They cannot debate. I have not heard one Member from the government side yet

make a reasonably good argument in favour of the Bill, except for the Minister who is trying to bootleg this Bill through the House so that he can get out there and snap his suspenders or whatever they do in trying to mislead Canadians into thinking this is a good Bill. It is not a good Bill, I regret. It needs to be improved.

In Ontario it will be absolutely impossible for the Government to meet its requirements. The Government of Ontario had planned to expand by 12,000 spaces, but with this Government's legislative capping it at 200,000 spaces, Ontario will not be able to do it. Ontario has already announced that its expansion plans have been cut because the federal Government is refusing to fund its share over and above what Bill C-144 allows. In Toronto there are 4,000 families waiting to get into these day care spaces. Four thousand families are waiting to get their children into an environment which is conducive to good care and good education. But this Government does not care. It will promise 200,000 spaces over the next seven years, but debate has shown that that is very, very inferior to what we need. It is not even coping with the requirements of the day.

If one looks back over the previous years, one can see a doubling, a quadrupling of spaces under the CAP program, but CAP, the Canada Assistance Program, will not work any more because it has been taken out. The Government has put a ceiling of 200,000 spaces so the Canada Assistance Program will not be able to help the provinces cope with the problem of subsidies.

This Government has delayed continuously. It has not wanted to accept its responsibilities. Yet when it gets an idea, and in this case a bad idea, it bulldozes. I want to say a few things about my own preoccupation with my riding.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, in the riding of Ottawa—Vanier there is an urgent need for day care centres. There is an urgent need for spaces for our children, but under the present program, we will have to tell parents: Sorry, the Conservative Government had to set a ceiling, so there will be no room for your children. Come back in a few years, and we might get a grant under the program.

Mr. Speaker, I must say hundreds of families in my riding will be shocked to hear this Government has ignored their needs and turned down their very reasonable request for day-care spaces so that their children will be properly looked after and properly taught. I think it is incredible the Government could be so insensitive as to want to push a Bill through in one day, and I object to this positively odious procedure, there is no other word for it, this use of a bulldozer to get a bad Bill through the House. I wish the Hon. Member would rise in the House and explain in the course of the debate why he intends to vote for this Bill, because I intend to vote against it, Mr. Speaker.