

Time Allocation

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the bankers had advised the Government. However, Mr. Hitchman was asked to prepare a report only on June 25. He got to work with two other people and presented a preliminary report less than a month later. What did this preliminary report say? It told the Minister that a task force should be appointed to administer the bank and make the major decisions because Mr. Hitchman had of course noted that the doubtful loan practices were being continued. What happened to the Hitchman preliminary report? It was put in a drawer and nothing was done about it. This shows the incompetence and the lack of concern of a Minister who spent part of the summer in Paris and who, on her return, wrote letters to the shareholders telling them that it was all right to keep their money in the bank. Those letters are dated August 9, 1985. On August 14, a report said that the bank was no longer viable, or rather this happened as early as August 12, but two days went by before the Minister read this report since, according to her, she saw it on August 14.

Mr. Speaker, this shows an unparalleled incompetence and lack of concern. Why is it that a Minister who authorized the selling of a few cans of tainted tuna has resigned, that another Minister who had problems with his electoral expenditures has resigned, while a Minister who will cost \$1 billion to the Canadian taxpayers is still sitting comfortably in her seat, as is the Minister of Finance? In addition, we are being muzzled to prevent us from discussing this Bill and telling the Canadian people that the incompetence of the Government has not only killed the Canadian Commercial Bank, but also caused the Northland Bank to close its doors, its employees to lose their jobs and an important financial institution in Western Canada to disappear in spite of all the work that was done to establish regional banks in the West.

In an earlier speech, I had suggested a four-point plan to save the Northland Bank. If closure had not been imposed, we might have succeeded in convincing the Government to accept this plan. If need be, we would have attached a small blue card to the document and sent it to the Cabinet, as, apparently, such a card shows that a document has been checked by a Conservative. When it has not been checked by a Conservative, there is no little blue card. So, perhaps someone on the Conservative side could have been found and asked to put his little blue card on, and this might have saved the Northland Bank which did not deserve to close down. And certainly if it has come down to this, it is because of the Government's incompetence and indifference.

Mr. Speaker, in this matter—

Mrs. Duplessis: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): The Hon. Member for Louis-Hébert (Mrs. Duplessis) on a point of order.

Mrs. Duplessis: Mr. Speaker, when the Hon. Member refers to blue cards, this is irrelevant. I would ask him to stick to the rule of relevance.

Mr. Garneau: Would the Hon. Member for Louis-Hébert (Mrs. Duplessis) be ready to use her little blue card, and give her OLC to the possibility for the Government to withdraw its closure motion in order to allow for a more detailed examination of the Northland Bank situation? Of course, she is only a backbencher. Maybe she does not know about the little blue cards. But Cabinet Ministers know about those little blue cards.

Mr. Speaker, in this legislation we see double standards being used. The foreign banks are reimbursed, but the chartered banks which were involved in the bail-out attempt are not. Mr. Speaker, this is grossly unfair, as we could have shown, if such a democracy-wise contemptible motion of closure had not been introduced. They have the gall to suggest this in order to put forth other prices of legislation. Mr. Speaker, we are not the ones responsible for this CCB and Northland Bank fiasco. This Government is responsible. It should take the blame and table action accordingly. They sent two banks down the drain, and now they tell us: "Hurry up, clean up that mess! Get it out of this House, so the Canadian people will not see it on their television screens, so they will not see how incompetent we are. Let us try and cover that up in future tax increases." Mr. Speaker, I submit this is utterly unacceptable, undemocratic for a Government to use its majority to force a motion of closure through only a few days after the second reading of the Bill has been moved, in order to hide its incompetence.

• (1120)

[*English*]

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the members of the New Democratic Party are going to vote against this time allocation motion. We oppose this motion, as we oppose Bill C-79. We oppose a gag on the debate, Mr. Speaker, because the full reasons for this bail-out are not yet known. They are not forthcoming from this Government. We know little about who will be reimbursed, notwithstanding that some of the individuals and companies involved will be receiving very large amounts of money.

We know very little about the reason the Northland Bank is being treated in the same way as the Canadian Commercial Bank. We now have a great deal of information about the Canadian Commercial Bank. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, based on the information received as a result of the hearings of the Finance Committee held in May and June, we believe that the Government should have acted then and not waited until September.

Mr. Speaker, the passage of this motion would ensure that the debate on this Bill in the House will cease very quickly. It has been suggested that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) have been hiding behind the skirt of the Minister of State for Finance (Mrs.