

Allotment of Time for Bill C-11

another three days, and as is traditional, we shall probably have one or two more days afterwards. This means, Mr. Speaker, that we shall have spent 32 days studying the budgetary legislation introduced in the spring whereas this used to take 12 or 15 days. It is with great regret that I introduce this motion.

[English]

I think the people of Canada are entitled to some decisions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chrétien: At second reading of this bill the opposition did not have the courage to vote against it. Hon. members opposite voted for it because they knew they could not vote against the budget measures which had been proposed. Now they are dragging their feet. It was said that one of the obstacles was that for much of the debate I was not in the House, so I have made it a point to be here all the time.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: That is our problem.

Mr. Chrétien: If that is the problem, I will leave it to my parliamentary secretary, because I have an excellent parliamentary secretary.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1552)

Mr. Chrétien: If I do that, they will say I did not take my responsibility. I know the parliamentary secretary is better than any of the critics they have on the other side.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chrétien: I missed only one day last week when I went to talk to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. I would like to say to the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), who is asking me questions about that meeting, that he obviously has a friend there. I do not mind—

An hon. Member: More than one.

Mr. Chrétien: I do not mind. I do not have to withdraw anything. While talking on the phone with the executive secretary of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, he was appalled—

Mr. Stevens: You raised it first.

Mr. Chrétien: —that someone would go rushing to the hon. member right away—

Mr. Stevens: On a point of order, I believe the minister very carefully explained to the House that he first raised the meeting with the Chamber of Commerce before the standing committee of this House, and took it upon himself to say that he had made certain observations to that meeting in Toronto. If the minister is receiving flack from the executive secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, he should accept that personally—because he raised the meeting, not us.

[Mr. Chrétien.]

Mr. Chrétien: The communication I have from the executive secretary of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce was to offer his apologies that I was there. In my usual style, I told him like it is, and I do not have to withdraw anything I have said. He said to me that he wanted to offer an apology that the hon. member for York-Simcoe would use one of the members of the Chamber of Commerce as his personal spy.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chrétien: I do not mind, they hired spies all over the place for many years, and I am not embarrassed by that. I just wanted to report to the House that I have received the apology of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and I said that in their organization, like any other, there could be some rotten apples.

Mr. Stevens: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I know the minister is trying to get into flight here, but I wonder if he would accept a question before he flies any farther.

Mr. Chrétien: I have answered many questions from the hon. member for the last two months since I have been Minister of Finance.

An hon. Member: He has not had a good answer yet.

Mr. Chrétien: After so many days here in committee and in debate, he has not scored very often.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chrétien: I want to say that it is urgent, for the economic good of this nation, to pass this bill. The people who will receive tax exemptions on January—are entitled to know exactly where we stand. If hon. members on the other side do not agree with what is proposed, why did they vote for these measures at second reading, and now are dragging their feet? For what good? The people of Canada who are watching us on television will find it incredible that we have spent a month on such an item. I am just doing today what Westminster is doing every day; they allocate the business of the House of Commons. As a Francophone from Quebec, I am not embarrassed at all in taking a traditional mood from Westminster, England.

Today we have decided, in the name of the government, that there is going to be a vote on these measures at the end of the third day. I have moved such a motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): I regret to inform the hon. member, but his time has expired. The hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens).

Mr. Chrétien: I have to move the following motion:

That in relation to Bill C-11, an Act to amend the statute law relating to income tax and to provide other authority for the raising of funds, three sitting days shall be allotted to the further consideration in committee of the whole stage of the said bill;

That, on the third of the said days, at 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government business in such sitting, any proceeding before the committee shall be interrupted, if required, for the purpose of this order and, in turn, every question then necessary in order to dispose of the committee of the