

Government Orders

and co-operated so that both parties could be heard, and this is the appreciation they get. The grandstanding and the criticism in the press came after that.

I was present, I heard the explanation to that and that is a different set of facts. I am just saying what I saw and what I heard differs from what the hon. member just said.

His decision to put on a flair that he is the person now representing all of Canada because he has such an interest and such a caring heart for the unemployed is adverse to reality. Everybody cares about the unemployed, but we also have a concern about the deficit and the debt. We also have a concern about how to approach it.

For a member who quite clearly wants to separate from the rest of Canada to state and argue and present a case that we are not for Canada borders on double talk or contradiction of terms.

He is talking about a member of the Reform Party being present or not being present at these committees. I was not the individual named to the subcommittee that examined Bill C-17. I am sure there were problems getting people together. I am sure it was hard to co-ordinate it all because there are only 100 things that you have to do within an hour around this place.

• (1710)

If he truly were interested in representing his point of view, representing his argument, I suggest that he would go a lot further in accomplishing those goals if he pointed out the problems of Bill C-17 as we have, pointed out the constructive alternatives to Bill C-17 as we have, and then let the House decide which way to vote instead of going around and basically distorting the way events actually occurred.

[Translation]

Mr. Loubier: Mr. Speaker, I will start with the hon. member's last remark because it makes me a little angry. He said that, instead of criticizing as I do, I should point out the problems of Bill C-17 and propose solutions. Mr. Speaker, we just went through second reading of Bill C-17 and Reform members were too lazy to do anything other than delete clauses. They also voted against their own amendments and they are now telling Bloc members who put forward constructive amendments meeting the concerns of Quebecers and Canadians to make constructive suggestions. So why did they make all these deletions?

In any case, even colleagues with more experience than me had never seen anyone propose such amendments and vote against their own amendments. If they call this being constructive, we also call it wasting our time. If they think the way they acted during the second reading debate is constructive, we have a problem. We, on the other hand, proposed real amendments. We also did some serious work in committee.

In answer to the second point raised by the hon. member when he said that Reform members were present the night the New Brunswickers were thrown out, I would ask him to refer to an article published in the May 11, 1994 issue of *Le Droit*, where the journalist noticed the same thing I did in the finance committee, namely that no Reform member was present. It is there in black and white. There is a problem somewhere.

In the third point he made, he said that Bloc members felt deep compassion for the people of the Maritimes. Indeed, even sovereigntists can be humanistic and feel compassion for suffering people but we do not feel as compassionate toward those who make them suffer.

Do not forget that the sovereignty plan is open to the world and that we have been reaching out for 25 years to our friends in Canada, the United States and the world to build a better society, a society where measures such as the UI proposal that break the backs of those who do not deserve such treatment will be opposed by sovereigntists. We will fight against that our whole lives because the sovereignty plan is strongly humanistic. You tarnished that term and our plan. Because people like Pierre Elliott Trudeau fought against this plan for 25 years, we must work very hard to restore the true foundations of this plan, which is open to the world, compassionate and humanistic.

Mr. Speaker, that takes care of the three questions raised by the hon. members.

[English]

Mr. Barry Campbell (St. Paul's): Mr. Speaker, I guess we can conclude that the member opposite is not happy with the bill.

I was chair of the subcommittee on C-17 and I want to congratulate all members of the subcommittee from all political parties in this House for their work and the time they spent hearing innumerable witnesses, almost some 60 witnesses representing hundreds of thousands of employed and unemployed Canadians. Members of the subcommittee spent many hours listening to Canadians and their views both for and against the changes contained in Bill C-17.

The fact remains that the changes proposed will preserve the viability of this system. The changes proposed will build flexibility. The changes proposed make sense at this time for people on the system.

• (1715)

While the member opposite may wrap himself in all the indignation in the world, the fact is that he did not like the bill from the beginning. He was not prepared to hear anybody who was in favour of it. I will not get into discussions in the House about what took place in committee. I will not discuss that out of committee except to say that people on all sides of the issue were given a full and fair hearing.