

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, October 4, 1990

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

[English]

POINT OF ORDER

CONCURRENCE IN BILL C-44

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order regarding a set of serious concerns I have about the vote yesterday evening on concurrence at the report stage of Bill C-44, the Hibernia development project bill.

I have reviewed the tapes and have reviewed *Hansard* for that moment, and I would like to bring the following to the House's attention.

Yesterday, when the Deputy Speaker put the question, I and other members of my caucus said no. The Chair did not hear us, and I assume that others around her did not either, or they would have advised her of the dissenting voices. However, Mr. Speaker, we did not say no. I can only assume that our dissent to this bill was drowned out by the collective voices of the Liberals and Conservatives who were much closer to the Speaker than ourselves.

The result of this inability to hear was that our caucus was unable to vote against this stage of the bill. Yet, we have spoken repeatedly against this project at second reading, during report stage debate and debate on the time allocation motion. Surely the House should have anticipated that a bill which required time allocation would not be adopted unanimously.

This is not the first time that the House has encountered difficulties on important divisions, but I would like to think that this will be the last.

I seek your guidance, Mr. Speaker, on finding means to ensure that our voices are heard by the Chair in the

future. In the meantime, however, the record shows that concurrence at report stage was given unanimously. This is clearly an incorrect record. I would like that division to be taken again but understand of course that the Chair and the House would be reluctant to do so.

At the very least, I would like to move that the record be corrected to show that concurrence was not given unanimously. I have an appropriate motion which I think will indicate very simply that. I would like to read the motion and then seek unanimous consent to have it put. I move:

That the record of debate at report stage of Bill C-44, an act respecting the Hibernia development project and to amend certain acts in relation thereto, be amended by deleting the words "Accordingly, the bill, as amended, was concurred in at report stage" and replacing them with the following: "Accordingly, the bill, as amended, was concurred in at report stage, on division".

I would like to seek unanimous consent to be able to put that motion. That would then not change what happened yesterday. Of course a decision was made. I think that inadvertently, because of the rather exuberant mood of the House at that moment, the noes that were stated at that time simply were not heard by the Speaker.

If the House were to accept this motion, it would simply clear the record, and we would be able to move on with the business of the House.

Mr. Speaker: I do not want to make the same mistake twice, the alleged mistake. The motion has been put.

Mr. Cooper: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: In one minute. I took it that the House is in agreement with the motion.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I just want to confirm that in fact what we are agreeing to is the motion itself and not putting ourselves in a position of debating the motion. I want to make sure that we are all agreeing to pass it by unanimous consent.

Mr. Speaker: That is my understanding. Is that the understanding of the hon. member?