

Proposal for Time Allocation

this bill and proceed to deal with other measures which are also of great importance to Canada and to Canadians.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, we have just heard a representative of a small minority in this house lecture the house and tell us that parliamentary business should not be prevented from going through because of the actions of a small minority. He himself is one of the best examples of the delay which sometimes characterizes this house, representing as he does only five members or possibly just himself.

Time and time again the hon. member who has just spoken rises to take part in debates in this house. He should be heard from on a proportionate basis, about once a week. Yet the house very kindly permits him to stand up and give lectures on the rules, to speak on points of order, to participate in debates. He has spoken twice during the debate on unification, though without adding anything to it. In my party of 96 members—it is not a small minority in the house—we never take the time which should be allotted to us. It is distributed. I am surprised that the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson), representing this rump of a party—

Mr. Olson: Would the hon. gentleman permit a question? Does he consider he has any greater right to speak in this house than I have? I believe he has spoken five times in the unification debate thus far.

An hon. Member: Six.

Mr. Churchill: Well, I believe I have a little more knowledge of the subject than the hon. member has. In any case, there are 96 members of this party who have a right to speak before the hon. member is heard. But that is not the way we operate. We are more charitable. We allow him to rise and speak and we suffer, generally in silence.

I will make one comment with regard to another remark of the hon. member for Medicine Hat. He attempted to leave it on record that when I made certain proposals with regard to the unification bill I was concealing the fact that it could not be placed on the order paper again in the same position it had formerly occupied and that I was being hypocritical in the offer I made. This, I deny. When I made my offer last Friday and when I repeated it on Monday to the house leader I said to him that part of the package deal would be an agreement as far as our party

was concerned to put the unification bill back on the order paper in exactly the same position as it is now, in committee of the whole house. There is nothing hypocritical about that.

I raised this matter in a further question today. I referred to it again in a question to the leader of the New Democratic party while the Prime Minister was here. I extended the offer in the interest of getting on with the business of the house, impressed by my knowledge of what is to be done and impressed by that enormous list of two years' work that the Prime Minister read, being just as keen to get on with the business of the country as anyone else but opposed to having parliament subjected to pressure in connection with a bill which is not urgent. There is no urgency at all about the unification bill.

The Minister of National Defence has told us it will be several years before Bill C-243 becomes fully operative. The real reason for the proposal I put forward with regard to its postponement was contained in the evidence given by General Allard and by the adjutant general before the defence committee as well as the answers given by the Minister of National Defence himself in the committee and here in this house, namely, that this bill will not be proclaimed until the regulations have been written and approved and that these regulations will not be ready for some four to six months. Then we should also consider the fact that until the bill is proclaimed it is not law. General Allard assured us in the defence committee that not one single step with regard to unification other than planning would be undertaken before the bill is proclaimed. That is the whole basis of the proposition I have put forward for the postponement of the bill. There is absolutely no urgency with regard to it.

Mr. Hellyer: May I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

Mr. Churchill: Yes.

Mr. Hellyer: The adjutant general made it very clear that it would be impossible to draft the regulations until the precise wording of the act was known. The hon. gentleman wanted to allow clauses 2 and 6 to stand. Let us hypothecate for a moment. If there was suddenly some change in clauses 2 and 6, of what relevancy then would regulations be which had been prepared on the basis of the original draft? It was primarily for this reason that the legal branch of the department and all responsible officers of the department have