

**Mr. Milliken:** I said so-called holidays. I know the Minister of State for Privatization works like a Trojan when he is not here, but the fact is that Parliament could have been recalled. We could have been here to deal with that issue. Instead government members chose to ignore the facts. They said: "We will wait. We will get Parliament back together and then after two or three days of debate we will close her down. We will stop members from debating this bill any more", because they are so embarrassed by its contents.

It was debated on October 11, October 17, October 18, and finally on November 20. Let us look at the days just to see. That sounds like a lot, four days on second reading of a bill. Let us look at the days. October 11 was a Wednesday. October 18 was a Wednesday. Those are the shortest possible days that you can discuss government business in Parliament. Yet those are two of days on the list of four which the government says that this bill has been debated.

On October 17 it was debated for a full normal Tuesday and then on November 20 they applied closure. We had a late night sitting to deal with the bill because of the application of the closure rule. We went on until 11.30 at night. We could have gone to 1; if the minister had been here to speak perhaps we would have.

The fact is that the debate ended and the minister did not participate, as I recall, on that particular evening. I regret that. I would have enjoyed a speech from him. Perhaps he will speak tomorrow. The fact is that the debate was closed off on November 20 and the matter went to a committee. It has come back to the House by report.

When was it debated at report stage? There were about, as I recall, seven amendments moved at report stage. It was debated for one hour on Friday morning from 11 until 12 and then the heavy-handed Minister of Justice walked into the House and slammed down a little time allocation motion on us.

The Minister of Justice was here this morning introducing his motion. It was one of those flippant happy speeches that the minister so likes to make, designed to charm the people in his riding but not designed to charm the opposition or anybody who has a responsible view of the duties of a government in Parliament.

### *Time Allocation*

The duty of the government is to account in this House. I see the minister running from the door. The obligation of this particular bunch is to come in here and tell the House what is going on, to account and be responsible. Instead they say: "No, we do not want to discuss this bill. We will simply close off debate as soon as we can get an opportunity".

One hour at report stage and the government is in here moving a time allocation order. It is a disgrace. It is an absolute disgrace. It says that we will have one more day.

Guess what is going to happen, Madam Speaker: One day on report stage. That will be on Tuesday. It will be a full day and then one day on third reading. It will be Wednesday, another short day; probably two and a half hours of debate maximum at third reading on this bill. That is what the government calls a full day of debate. That is what the government calls a responsible attitude to Parliament. That is what the government calls the spirit of parliamentary reform.

I see the Minister of Justice has appeared from behind the curtains. He should come and sit in this House and tell the House his views on this motion, instead of the flippant speech he gave this morning when he smirked and snickered his way through what could only be regarded as a travesty for the rights of parliamentarians to discuss an issue of great importance. This bill is one of the major bills coming out of the budget that was introduced, that leaked budget that the Minister of Finance had all across the television screens before he could introduce it in this House last spring.

This bill, as everyone knows, claws back pensions. It is a totally unfair package of tax increases for senior citizens. No other group in Canada is being discriminated against the way senior citizens are being discriminated against. The Minister of Justice, of all people, the representative of the sovereign as the fountain head of all justice in Canada, is in here applying closure and this kind of tactic to a bill that is designed to be unfair, to discriminate, to do everything that a bill should not do. The Minister of Justice is the one who is seen to countenance this kind of injustice toward the seniors in this country. No other group is being subjected to 100 per cent tax on their income or any portion of it and yet that is what this bill does for the seniors of Canada.