

facilitate the entrance of visible minorities in the Public Service. We are starting to see the results and they are very positive.

• (1450)

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FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the House leader as well. He has suggested that there would be ample debate within the finance committee. In fact, the motion which was put before the committee last night says there will be five minutes of debate on each amendment. Do this minister and his government feel that five minutes of debate on each amendment is ample opportunity?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, after three years of committee study and touring the country and so on, to talk of five minutes is a bit ridiculous. But even five minutes is more than the NDP were allowing with their filibuster.

This committee order, as I read it, provides for several more days, many hours each day, of study of the bill and allows that there be at least five minutes on each amendment so that there is not an automatic push-through.

If New Democratic Party members had been willing or, indeed, are willing now to reach some reasonable accommodation as to when they would be prepared to see all motions put, then something could be done. As long as they remain unreasonable, somebody has to reach a decision.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, in fact it was a maximum of five minutes of which one minute would have to go to the Finance Department. So we, the members of Parliament, get just four minutes.

Does the Prime Minister feel that this kind of dictatorship in committee is satisfactory in this country when he himself stands up for democracy in South Africa?

Oral Questions

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, for weeks and weeks, months and months indeed, we have been asking the New Democrats to tell us when they were prepared to see democracy work and a decision to be voted on by the committee. They refused absolutely to ever make a commitment that they would ever allow a vote to come to the committee.

Their filibuster took up the equivalent of 20 sitting days of that committee. Surely after that amount of time the hon. member has to concede in his heart of hearts that it is time to put the question.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I know you would be interested in a phenomenon that occurred 51 years ago today where the perfect alignment of the stars signalled the birth of our Prime Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: That may be, but what possibly could be the question?

Mr. Schneider: Does he know that it is my birthday in two days?

On a much more serious matter, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. He will recall that two executives of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company were charged with a criminal offence. They are apparently free on bail in the state of Texas but are not permitted to leave the state. It is my understanding that their trial will not be held until September.

Can the federal government intercede somehow to allow these individuals to come back to Canada to at least spend that time prior to the trial with their families?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the question relates to two Canadians, Don Castle and Darrell Lowry. The arrangements and laws that are in place do not allow those two individuals, in the current circumstances, to get back to Canada. They are facing criminal charges in Texas. Since that matter is before the courts I cannot comment further on it.