ment, as he was in the previous Government, and found himself in a position where the Opposition was not present for debate when it was supposed to be, would he have just said: "I am not going to worry about the people of Canada who could benefit from these measures, I am just going to carry on debate for the rest of the afternoon"? Would he have done that?

• (1540)

Mr. Rompkey: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the Hon. Member in the spirit in which they are taken. I would simply say this to her, that in terms of budget initiatives some are assumed to go into effect as soon as the Budget is read by certain Government Departments. There is an assumption normally made that even as debate is taking place Departments will have to assume that the measures proposed by the Government are going to be passed eventually, and they proceed to act as if that were the case.

Second, of course some budget measures will have to be approved by individual legislation, which is quite different from the budget debate. If a piece of legislation came forward for farmers or some other group in the country, I fully agree that it would be incumbent on us to move that as quickly as possible, but what we are doing here today is taking part in the Budget debate. I say to her again, as I said earlier on, that in my experience the two debates in Parliament where latitude and freedom are granted are the Throne Speech debate and the budget debate. It has been assumed over the years, I think, that individual Members are given time to speak in these two debates. Normally, in my experience, as I recall there was not an attempt made to cut off Members from speaking on the Budget debate or the Throne Speech debate. It has been acknowledged on both sides of the House that that is the practice that has been followed. I appreciate her intervention, but I have to say to her again that I regret that that practice was not followed through today because of a technicality.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis) rises on a question or a comment?

Mr. Lewis: Yes, on a comment. Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my colleague, the Hon. Member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey) that we had no intention of disturbing the mood of the House. At the time the vote was called there was no one in the House from the Opposition and we were prepared to proceed with the business of the day. I have a great respect, and I say this very sincerely, for my hon. friend.

I think my colleague has made many of the remarks I want to make. Had we had any indication whatsoever that someone from the Opposition was prepared to speak, we would have reverted, I would have asked for unanimous consent to revert to the Budget debate to allow him to do so. That is the very reason that we have called debate on the borrowing Bill in order to give members of the Opposition who had speeches they wanted to make an opportunity to speak, and we are pleased to give them that opportunity.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) for a question or comment?

Mr. Gauthier: Since we are commenting on the speech of the Hon. Member, I would like to tell him that it is unfortunate that the Government decided to cut off its own speakers by holding the vote on the main motion.

An Hon. Member: Come on!

Mr. Gauthier: That is indeed the case because the length of your intervention and mine was limited in the Budget debate, which is supposed to be a special debate where Members can speak about the projects and the problems of their constituencies and suggest solutions, and this was taken away from us. As for the Conservative Members who voted for the motion, as well as those who were unable to vote because they were either in the lobby or were on their way to the House, I must unfortunately tell them that when we adjourned at 1:17 p.m., we had agreed that the next speaker would be a Conservative, more specifically the Hon. Member for Beauharnois-Salaberry (Mr. Hudon).

Mrs. Mailly: I was there.

Mr. Gauthier: I am sorry, but you were not. However, I was, and the Hon. Member for Beauharnois-Salaberry, who is a gentleman, will himself recognize that he came to my seat to tell me that he would like to speak after 2 o'clock. The Hon. Member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey) was supposed to follow him. Since the Hon. Member for Beauharnois-Salaberry did not rise, the vote was held. I am sorry, Madam Member for Gatineau, but you should listen instead of talking. Perhaps you can do both at the same time, but I know that I cannot. Listen to what people tell you. You were not even here at the time.

Mrs. Mailly: Yes, I was here.

Mr. Gauthier: If you were here, then you should understand.

Mrs. Mailly: I was indeed in the House.

Mr. Gauthier: You were not here in your place together with the Hon. Member for Beauharnois-Salaberry (Mr. Hudon) when—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please! I am aware that the Hon. Member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Rompkey) has referred to what happened during the vote on the Budget. I had hoped, however, that we would not spend the whole afternoon debating this point. As there is a bill before the House, I urge Hon. Members to make comments or ask questions to the sponsor of this bill. I recognize again the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier).