

Time Allocation

Mr. Speaker, in concluding, I would like to quote something I read earlier in this morning's *Gazette*, a Quebec newspaper, where it says at the end of the article:

• (1540)

[English]

"The proposed changes are sound. Ottawa should stick to its guns".

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, I do not think the Parliamentary Secretary understands what this debate is all about. It is not a debate on a Bill to change the Patent Act. It is a debate on closure introduced by the Government. I want to remind Hon. Members opposite that after only seven Members have spoken in the debate—and they have 212 seats in the House—the Government indicated its intention to introduce closure. This has never happened before in the history of Canada.

If you listen carefully today, Mr. Speaker, you will hear from the Conservative side of the House the stomp of jackboots. Jackboot democracy is what we are seeing imposed on Parliament today. This is not surprising because it was the present Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre) who stormed your chair and closed down Parliament for two weeks. Quite frankly, we are now seeing that same sentiment emerge. The Government has no interest in Parliament. In fact, its absolute contempt for Parliament was demonstrated a few years ago when the Conservatives closed down this place. For the first time in Canadian history they shut down Parliament. They said they would no longer permit it to exist. In my estimation, that showed the true intent of the Conservative Party and indicated its contempt for Parliament, for parliamentary democracy and representative democracy.

The New Democrats offered a very reasoned suggestion that we would be prepared to co-operate at all stages of the Bill if the Government would take this issue across the country. The Parliamentary Secretary told us that this group and that group is in favour of the legislation, but if she was being honest—and I am sure she is—she would also have said that there is a list of other groups which have indicated concern about this legislation, including the Yukon Territorial Government, the Ontario provincial Opposition, the Nova Scotia provincial Opposition, the Progressive Conservative lobbyists centred here in Ottawa, senior citizens' groups across Canada, the Consumers' Association of Canada and many academics who are opposed to this legislation. We could go on and on, page after page of newspaper columnists, editorial writers and various groups and individuals who oppose this legislation. If the Parliamentary Secretary is fair she would say that there are at least two groups of people in Canada, those who think this is good legislation and those who think it is bad.

What we propose is to go across the country and hold half a dozen hearings in the regions of Canada in order to allow various groups to present their views. But, oh, no, that is not going to take place. The Government is going to introduce

closure. It is going to impose the tyranny of the majority on the House. It was that arrogance that the people of Canada feared once they saw this majority Government take office. They feared that once the Conservatives got the bit in their teeth they would say: "We can impose anything we want. We can jam any legislation down the throats of Canadians. We can ignore the opposition Parties and groups and individuals who speak against us because we now have the power to do anything we want". That is what we are seeing today.

I want to say again, particularly to Hon. Members sitting opposite, that after only seven speakers, out of 212 seats in this House, rose in their place to speak on this legislation, from both sides, the Government said: "That's it. We have had enough. We are going to shut the place down. We do not want any further input at second reading stage". This is a Bill which is going to increase the price of prescription drugs to the tune of \$650 million a year. That is not our figure. It is the figure which comes from the firm of Currie, Coopers & Lybrand, one of the most prestigious firms in the country. It may be out by a few million dollars or a few tens of millions of dollars, but the point is that hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars in additional drug costs will be imposed upon the people of Canada.

Do you think, Mr. Speaker, as a reasonable individual, that to go out and hold hearings in half a dozen cities across Canada would be an unreasonable thing to do? The Government thinks it is. It does not want input. I predict that in one form or another, the Government will impose closure on the committee, at report stage and at third reading in order to keep this debate to an absolute minimum. It will jam the legislation through. It will jam this legislation down the throats of sick and disabled Canadians and senior citizens. This is the kind of legislation that that Party would like to see introduced. We say it is wrong. That is not the approach of a parliamentary democracy. The Opposition has a right to present its opposing views but we are having that right denied us. Jackboot democracy is being imposed on this House of Commons. That is unCanadian and unparliamentary. It is, quite frankly, a demonstration of the Government's ultimate contempt for the parliamentary system. When the people of Canada find out after today what the Government has done and remember that that is the same Party that closed down Parliament, and once they have an opportunity to respond, as they will have in a few months, we will see what they think of this. From a majority Government, it is now down to 30 per cent in the polls. Those Hon. Members opposite should feel embarrassed that they have allowed themselves to be dragged down so quickly, more quickly than any other Government in Canadian history, because of the unthinking jackboot type of approach the Conservative Party has adopted to Government and to this House.

As a result of some of the things I have said, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong), that:

The motion be amended by deleting the following words in paragraph 1, "one additional sitting day" and substituting the following: