

*Government Orders*

I know periodically we do silly things, or at least things people perceive to be silly. However with something which is so obviously ridiculous I cannot imagine why these commissioners are soldiering on on a mission impossible but I suppose that is a decision they can make. I call upon them to acknowledge that regardless of where and how these public hearings will be conducted it will cost the taxpayers of Canada money.

Whether or not one agrees with what the Liberal government is doing, it is a reality. As my friend from the Reform Party indicated earlier the Liberals have the muscle in Parliament to do whatever they want anyway.

The Liberal government for whatever reason decided to shortchange British Columbia in the next election. It decided to intercept this arm's length and what should be a non-political, fair process by saying it is going to stop this dead in its tracks. If it has to upset the flow of Parliament it will do that. If it has to use time allocation or a form of closure to muzzle MPs from speaking on this, it will do that too. Unfortunately that is the reality. I hang my head in regret when I see my hon. friends opposite participating in such a way.

In terms of the amendment, the suggestion my hon. friend from the Reform Party has put forward that we reduce the time of waiting to one year makes some sense. It at least gives some hope that this process could be rescued in time for the next general election. I do not think it will. From what my hon. friend opposite has indicated I do not think it is going to get the support of the government, but it is a laudable amendment. It is one we should enthusiastically support.

Hopefully as the debate progresses today other members will see the value of trying to streamline this process so there will be at least some possibility of a more representative and democratic electoral system being in place prior to the next general election.

Knowing the government was bringing in time allocation and had rushed this bill through the committee process prior to the Easter recess, the premier of British Columbia asked me to represent British Columbians' point of view, if I had a chance to speak to this piece of legislation.

For years and years they have felt shortchanged with lack of representation, lack of clout at the cabinet table and wherever. Once again very clearly one of the fastest growing parts of Canada will be let down in terms of democratic and representative representation in the House of Commons after the next general election. Particularly, it will have an impact on the lower mainland of British Columbia and on some of the rapidly growing parts of central British Columbia where there has been tremendous population growth in the last decade and likely will continue in the next few years by all projections.

We support the amendments put forward by our friends in the Reform Party at this report stage process, particularly the one giving us some hope to streamline the operation.

• (1050)

It is sad to say with respect but with regret to my friends, to take a particular action which will adversely affect British Columbia and clearly result in one of the most dynamic and fastest growing parts of Canada being improperly represented in the House of Commons is something this party cannot support.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Kamloops. He and I flew west on the same plane and the same seat when we were going home before the Easter break.

**Mr. Riis:** Different seats.

**Mr. Grey:** Yes, different seats. The same pair of seats then, forgive me. Maybe we are saving a lot of money then. I had better get on with Bill C-18 as soon as possible.

We had an interesting talk on the plane about this whole idea and what it is that is happening here. All of us on both sides of the House need to look at it. Why is something being rammed through as quickly as possible? My antennae go up as soon as I see something like that. I suspect the Canadian public feels very much the same way. As soon as it sees something going into a crisis mode it wants to stop, wait, look and ask why we are being thrown into a crisis mode all of a sudden.

The issue here is the fact this is being rammed through Parliament so quickly. It was most unfortunate for people on the government side that we had to take Easter recess. This was something we know they wanted to ram through on the eve of Easter recess. It was a pity for the government. It was in a flap because it could not get this thing pushed through.

Antennae should go up right across the country when we see something like that happening. We should be asking questions. Why the rush? I do not see the need for the rush, quite frankly, except of course we know the timetable is in place for the current process to have the public hearings start very soon. That then demands there be a crisis for the government because it wants to cut that debate. It wants to shut down and put a lid on the public having any process or any input into these hearings. When people on the government benches go into the crisis mode saying to stop this thing cold and shut it down, then one wonders why this public process is being thwarted.

No, the process was not perfect before. However as soon as we see whatever process is in place, warts, flaws and all of the problems with it, it is a process that has been put into place and the public has not given a great outcry. There has not been a crisis from time to time except in Parliament because people are