

Mr. Mazankowski: Then and only then can there be genuine and realistic negotiations.

Mr. Axworthy: Good try, Don.

Mr. Mazankowski: The Minister of Transport, in committee and in the House, has talked about his willingness to co-operate and to accommodate new ideas. The Government House Leader has now suggested they will rule every proposal out of order before they have even heard it. We have some very unique propositions and we have responded to the invitation of the Minister of Transport. We are presenting them now because the Government, being so paranoid about its legislation being examined and debated in a vigorous way, wants to move closure and put the slammer on. It is not really interested in the real proposals we have.

I say in all sincerity, Madam Speaker, unlike the other Opposition Party, that we have tried to seek realistic and workable solutions. That has been our approach from day one. We have done it in committee.

Mr. Deans: That is the sound of one hand clapping.

Mr. Mazankowski: We have done it on second reading. I remind you, Madam Speaker, that this Government, attempted to move closure on second reading after two days. It imposed an artificial time frame during the course of the committee hearings. A 70-clause Bill resulted in 85 amendments, plus about 20 or so subamendments. The Bill is still not complete but the Government is taking the position that we are not even going to have an opportunity to debate the amendments it is proposing. I have never seen anything so ridiculous in my life.

We want to present our alternatives and debate them. If the Government is serious about negotiating, lift the veil of closure and we can get down to some serious discussions.

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, this Bill has been debated for months. At committee stage we accepted over 80 or so amendments. We have been debating report stage for the last 11 sitting days and over 170 speakers have participated in that unusually long debate. Last Friday we were willing to negotiate the amendments suggested by the Hon. Member but his Party saw fit to waste a day by forcing the House to debate a subject matter other than Bill C-155 which the Government intended to call. That is publicly known. They tried again to waste the time of the House on Monday, but failed. They succeeded yesterday in letting the bells ring for over an hour and a half, time during which we would have negotiated in good faith.

I can understand the Hon. Member being a bit obfuscated by the fact that we are attempting to limit debate at this time, but it is our duty to do so after having agreed to such a long time for debate on Bill C-155. I can understand that he does not like the idea. He says that he saw nothing more ridiculous in the past, but he will agree it is very ridiculous for him to show so much indignation in light of the fact that his own Party, he being part of the whole scheme, prevented debate

Business of the House

from going on last Friday and for an hour and a half or so yesterday. So if he is in good faith as he says, he will allow the Government to proceed under the Standing Orders, and he will negotiate.

● (1530)

Certainly he is dead wrong when he says that the Government has not been reasonable in that debate. That debate has lasted for months. He had ample opportunity to propose his amendments. We have accepted some 80 of them.

While we are still prepared to negotiate, we are certainly not stupid. We will move on that Bill and get it through. In the meantime, until we vote we will negotiate if the Hon. Member wants that. But he should not complain about our attempting to limit debate at this point, because he and his Party are the ones who have prevented debate from occurring during the last days on Bill C-155.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Madam Speaker, I would like to address my proposal to the Government House Leader because I want to facilitate the debate and do what I can to improve the Bill, as suggested by the Minister of Transport. Once they hear the proposal which I put forward, I ask Government Members to allow the following motion to be put to the House.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I see that the Hon. Member is again asking for unanimous consent on another amendment. I believe that he must have heard the Hon. President of the Privy Council tell the House that his Party would not give unanimous consent to any amendment at this particular time. What they would do at other times is their business, but it was quite clear to the Chair, as it should be to Hon. Members, that they will not get unanimous consent for the inclusion of these amendments at this time.

I am afraid that what I saw as an unusual procedure is becoming apparent. It seemed to me a bit awkward that the time allocated for questions on House business was being used to introduce modifications to a Bill, which modifications, if introduced, would not be easy to make at this particular stage. Now it is quite clear to the Chair that this is what is being sought.

Of course, amendments can be proposed, but Members must follow the usual procedure, unless the House gives its unanimous consent. As I see it, it is not prepared to give its unanimous consent. As well, they require notice following a procedure which is well known to all Members in the House. It is obvious to everyone, even to anyone watching us on television, that we are debating and not at all dealing with questions on House business. Members have entered into the debate and are suggesting alternatives which, legitimate though they may be, should be suggested at another time. The time of the House might be used for this if the House consents, but not at this particular time.

Another reason that it is difficult for me to allow these kinds of proposals to take place at this time is that Members are obviously anticipating the Orders of the Day and are not really asking questions about the business of the House.