

Government Orders

Mr. Reid: That's how much you worried about the debate.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): One day. The reason for that was because I can tell a done deal when I see one. I was simply unwilling to waste my time hearing a hallelujah chorus come before the committee, praising the deal to the skies and offering no critical assessment whatsoever. One day in committee, and that, by the way, was very quickly after second reading concluded. That was merely five days later. A day after that it was reported to this House by the chair of the committee. There after June 13, it languished, orphaned—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Ontario on a point of order.

Mr. Soetens: Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the hon. member who has just spoken, he was absolutely right that while he was in committee there were no objections raised, including by the member who has just spoken.

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, that was not entirely accurate. In fact, I attempted to propose several amendments to alter the bill, all of which of course were defeated.

Again, questions of accuracy do not bear close inspection in this House very often. In any event, we get to September 26 of this year and the bill is brought forward for report stage. A total of one hour and 43 minutes was spent on it at report stage. Two minutes at first reading and introduction, five and a half hours at second reading, six hours in committee, one minute to report it to the House and one hour and 40 minutes so far in report stage.

• (1820)

Is this unacceptable to this government? Does this cause it to bring in time allocation?

This is a government that demands that the legislative process move with the speed of Mercury. Our legislative process is not designed to do that. It is designed that we may consider the contents of a bill carefully at numerous steps. It is a prudent system, especially when it is proposed to allot in excess of \$3 billion in federal public taxpayers' money.

It is money that will have to be made up, perhaps by the GST. It is proposed that \$3 billion be invested. Given

the debate to date, we have been okaying that money at a rate in excess of \$4 million a minute. More than \$66,000 a second.

This can hardly be deemed dragging our heels. If I was able to drag my heels like this at home, I would be a wealthy man. I can guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, I am not that.

The government tells you that it must pass this legislation and the only way it can achieve that is over the prostrate corpse of the opposition, that the opposition has been obstructionist. El toro pooh-pooh.

Further, it tells you, Mr. Speaker, that this has got to be done because if it is not done, the project will collapse. In the committee, the minister admitted that the progress of the project at this point into the next year is utterly independent of whatever may happen in this House. There is much more than enough discretionary funding available to the government, the minister and the pools there now to cause the slightest ripple of worry until sometime next year.

The reason it is bringing in time allocation is because it fears the truth about this project: the squandering of public funds irresponsibly and to insufficient end.

[Translation]

Mr. François Gérin (Mégantic—Compton—Stansstead): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to Quebecers back home who are watching the proceedings on TV that I am an independent member of the Bloc québécois. I belong to the Bloc Québécois to serve the interests of Quebec here in the House of Commons and, if at all possible, Mr. Speaker, to convince my fellow citizens to accept or at least better appreciate the fact that we are moving rather quickly towards Quebec sovereignty. It is important that one and all understand that. In this bill—

Mr. Langlois: I am not so sure about that.

Mr. Gérin: No, no, no! I see a Quebec Conservative member in the House. Maybe the others have gone to bed. Yet this is an important bill—

Mrs. Landry: I am here.

Mr. Gérin: There is also a minister in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder how these Quebec Conservative members can applaud their government's imposing closure or lowering the boom after only a few hours of