

*Government Orders*

We have offered to negotiate with them all of those pieces of legislation to find out if there is between us an agreement as to how we will handle each and every piece of legislation. We recognize that some of the bills we proceed with are more controversial than others. Therefore we are prepared, on bills where there could well be agreement among the three parties to deal with them quickly, to add or attach the time that would normally have been used for debate on them to the more difficult and more controversial bills.

The problem we are facing at the moment is that we have no such agreement. In fact we have a sense that each and every bill, no matter how controversial or how important it is to members of this House, will continue to be debated without some sort of action being taken. That is a very serious matter that we need to look at. I think the reason that we need to look at it is that there is within the country a growing sense that this institution is breaking down. People are losing confidence in this institution.

• (1150)

Why are they doing that? I think there are a number of factors, one of which has to be the behaviour in the other place. That, under the leadership of the Liberal Party in this House, has done more to discredit the Senate and this institution than virtually any other item existing across this country today. For that there certainly should be loud cries of shame.

The other thing is that one of the problems we face in the question of time allocation and closure is that we hear words as those that were used a while ago by the House leader of the NDP when he said it is dictatorial. He has a favourite expression called putting the jack-boots to Parliament. Those very words imply something illegal, immoral, and wrong when in reality this is a legitimate exercise allowed for and created by the rules that we live by in this Chamber. How can that be, then, putting the jack-boots to Parliament? How is that somehow an action of a dictator? It is not.

The impression that is left with the Canadian people is that this institution is constantly in a state of aggressive confrontation, when all of us in this House know in fact that is not the case. There are on regular occasions

opportunities for us to agree, to do things by unanimous consent, to do things with minor disagreements, to allow something to proceed so that a minor amendment can be made and we as a House can agree to it. That is normal, acceptable behaviour in this House, just as the use of time allocation is normal, acceptable behaviour in this House when the negotiations break down.

The Canadian people need to understand that that kind of behaviour, that kind of rhetoric, is not in fact the reality within this Chamber. The reality is that we can and should be able to proceed as adults on all pieces of legislation. Canadians need to understand that this is not a forum where we all sit in a big circle and chit-chat with each other. It is a forum where we are separated by an aisle and we engage in aggressive debate. We try to put forward the pros and cons of each piece of legislation, and that is the style of the institution.

It does not mean that therefore the process itself has to be viewed as a war or a combat. The process is simply the means by which we do our business. In reality, the hard hitting debate has to come as we address the issues. That is why the rules state what they state. That is why they have provisions in them for this kind of situation.

Mr. Speaker, I see you have signalled that I am coming close to the end of my time, but I want to say this. The House leader for the New Democratic Party made several charges against the House leader on the government side, some very aggressive words. First, he should go back and read the record. It was not the House leader for the government who at any time marched the Chair in a debate of years ago. That was not the case. This House leader has a job to do, just as the New Democratic House leader has and as the House leader for the Liberal Party has. He has a job to push, to prod, to attempt to get his legislation through. When it is necessary he has to move time allocation and closure.

It is important for Canadian people to understand that that is only resorted to in times of—

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, I am very hesitant to interrupt my hon. friend's comments, but I rise on a point of clarification. I want to make it clear that whatever the House leader for the New Democratic Party does in the House, he does so with the support of his leader. I am suggesting that the House leader for the government