

Time Allocation

What does that tell us about the Government? Does it tell us that this Government believes in open, free debate? Of course not. It tells us that this Government does not believe in the most fundamental principles of free speech where those who are duly elected to serve Canadians in the House of Commons have an opportunity to express the views of their constituents. But we are being denied that opportunity. We are having that fundamental responsibility of Parliamentarians to reflect the views of our constituents taken away. We have been trying to reflect the views of the experts from all of the child care groups, the coalitions and the individuals who are respected from one side of Canada to another. They came to the committee and said: "Please, Mr. Prime Minister, start again. Please, Mr. Minister, don't proceed with this backward, regressive legislation. Put the interest of Canada's young people foremost rather than your political interest in terms of jamming some legislation through in the moments before an election call".

I say this is not only a dark day for Parliament but, worse, it is a dark day for the children of Canada that we have a Government that is so uncaring, so callous, so crass in its political efforts that it is prepared to set aside the interests of Canada's young people in order to play a political agenda at the expense of the young people of Canada.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I hear my colleague across the way saying I will have nothing to say because I agree.

Mr. Gauthier: You agree to everything. You are part of the seal pack.

Mr. Hawkes: Three-quarters of the Members of this House have agreed on second reading, on report stage and on this motion, I anticipate, and they will agree on the passage of third reading.

Mr. Gauthier: It's called dictatorship!

Mr. Hawkes: Three-quarters of the democratically-elected people of this country agree.

Mr. Gauthier: Call an election. We will take care of that.

Mr. Hawkes: What do they agree on, Mr. Speaker? They agree that children need better quality care. They agree that our children are a tremendous asset to this nation.

What is this Parliament asked to agree on in this piece of legislation? The New Democratic Party Member who just spoke said it is regressive legislation. I will tell you what he believes is regressive, Sir. It is regressive to put more money into child care. That is his view.

Mr. Gauthier: That is dishonest and you know it. You are twisting the facts again.

Mr. Hawkes: This is an absurd point of view from my perspective, but that is the view. This legislation is categorized

as regressive because we are putting more money into child care. That is a regressive step from a regressive Party which has a regressive view of this country.

What is the next principle in the Bill which the New Democratic Party and the Official Opposition find regressive? That parents should have a choice on how to take care of their children, that parental choice lies at the heart of the policy of our Party and at the heart of this legislation. The opposition Parties say that this is regressive, that more money is regressive, and that it is regressive that parents should have a choice about their own children.

What is the third principle involved in this Bill? That the federal Government respects the rights and the constitutional jurisdiction of the provinces. We hear that that is regressive, that it is regressive that we should have a nation in which there is co-operation between the federal Government and the provincial Governments in the provision of social services. That is not surprising for any of us who sat in this House under the last Government from 1980 to 1984. That Government cared not one whit. It was a Liberal Government which was supported by the New Democratic Party far too often. It cared not one whit for the constitutional arrangements of this country and jurisdiction. Give them half an inch and both Parties would take over education, health care, and the courts in this country. It is also consistent with their philosophy. They want to run the world and forget about provincial voters and provincial Governments.

They say the federal Government can run everything. My experience tells me that is not correct. Decisions made in Ottawa that affect the people in Trochu, Alberta are quite often not very sensitively done. When we are talking about the parents of this nation and their children, we should not have a group of elected politicians in Ottawa or bureaucrats who live in Ottawa telling the people in Newfoundland how to raise their kids. That is really what they are after. The only reason they believe this Bill is regressive is because it does not give central control about how parents should deal with their children. That is what they want, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Finestone: Garbage.

Mr. Hawkes: They want their view of what is right for the children of this nation to prevail. That is what bothers them the most. If it is not that, are they concerned about more money coming into the system? Surely they are not against that?

Ms. Dewar: I don't think you have read the legislation.

Mr. Hawkes: Surely they cannot be against parental choice? But they are. They are against more money. They are against parental choice and against respecting the Constitution of Canada and the jurisdictional arrangements between the two levels of Government.