

attitude and confidence. We have restored that confidence and we must go on. Mr. Speaker, the Government cannot tolerate... of course, they say we are taking advantage of the situation and of our majority. That is just not so, Mr. Speaker. When one has the majority one must act accordingly. To do so is to respect the will of Canadians who elected us on September 4 and who told us: Go ahead with your policies. We believe in them and we agree with you.

Mr. Speaker, I have finished my comments and I thank you.

[English]

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Gormley: It is a sad day.

Mr. Deans: It is not a question of being a sad day.

Mr. Crosbie: Try a black day.

Mr. Deans: I was interested in the comments made by the Hon. Member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake (Mr. Gormley). I yearn for the days when his predecessor said intelligent things here. In fact, I hear from those who normally vote Tory in Saskatchewan that they can hardly wait for the next election to return the former Member to his place in the House.

I do not want to make any apologies for what we are doing. The Government does not have an agenda of programs to bring forward. If it had programs, we would not have had six consecutive opposition days in the House. I tell the government Members not to give us that malarkey. Don't give us that malarkey about the Government wanting to get on with the business of Canada by bringing forward its programs to solve the very serious problems confronting the people of Canada.

The Government does not have programs to bring forward, and this is why we were forced to put up speaker after speaker to give our views on how the country ought to be run. The Conservative party was either afraid or unwilling to put up speakers to demonstrate its ideas. That has been the problem with this Parliament. I do not heap that abuse on new Members because I do not expect them to have particularly good ideas. Most of them did not expect to be elected in the first place.

With respect to the Government's present action, I believe that it is fundamental that we take every step necessary to preserve the integrity of this nation economically and socially. It is on our shoulders in this Parliament to do whatever we can to ensure that there will in fact be the kind of economic opportunities and social integrity that Canada has fought and struggled so hard to maintain for many years. What this Government is doing through this legislation is undermining that very purpose. I think that is what makes it so offensive to us on this side of the House.

● (1210)

It is true that FIRA was not all that it could have been. It is true that FIRA did not measure up in many ways to what

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some of us had anticipated it might do. It is also true that although FIRA was in place, there were a large number of takeovers about which I had some serious reservations and about which many of my colleagues had serious reservations. These were takeovers of what were good, viable operations in Canada that fell into foreign hands, the end result of which was that the viable operations ceased to exist. They were run down and ultimately closed. The end result of that was that the foreign competitor in his own country of origin was able to ship into Canada products that used to be made here because the competitor had successfully worn down the opposition right here in our own country.

I hold no particular torch for FIRA. I do not think that FIRA was a particularly useful mechanism in its over-all capacity to deal with the problem. It is certainly head and shoulders over what we now have before us, and it is for that reason we fought so hard. It is for that reason we took so long. It is for that reason we want to continue the debate on the Investment Canada Bill. It is a vital part of Canada's future.

This debate speaks to what Canada will be ten, fifteen, or twenty years from now. It speaks to whether we will allow almost total foreign ownership of the valuable resources of this land. That is why we are not at all eager to see this Bill dealt with expeditiously.

It is not a question of whether the Government got a mandate on September 4 last. Of course the Government did. However, that mandate did not extend to the dismantling of the very economic structures here. That mandate was more or less given because of the—

Mr. Rodriguez: Mismanagement.

Mr. Deans: —mismanagement, thank you, of the Liberal Party over a number of years prior to 1984. I do not want the government Members or the government supporters in the House to walk around with the misguided notion that somehow because the Conservatives won an overwhelmingly large number of seats in the September 4 election it automatically gives them the right to destroy the very substance of the country. It does not. It gives Conservatives the right to be a Government; it gives them the right to bring forward proposals to Parliament. But the parliamentary system is set up in such a way that Government proposes and Parliament disposes. That is what it is all about. The Government brings forward its ideas. Having those ideas put before Parliament, Parliament then decides at what point in time and in what way those ideas should be dealt with.

I suggest that in this Parliament, even with a combined 80 hours of debate on a Bill, its being of such a crucial nature, it is simply not long enough. There is other legislation. There is other legislation that we are quite prepared to deal with reasonably expeditiously, and we have said so. I have brought to the attention of the Government House Leader a list of legislative proposals that we would be prepared to deal with in a way that they should be dealt with, that is, expeditiously and speedily. We have pointed out that there is a need to deal with some of them immediately, but that there is no need to deal