

they are responsible to those people and will face them in any upcoming election. This indicates that an elected House is essential. No appointed Chamber can ever represent people of the land.

One difficulty with the present Senate is that it represents the opposite of mob rule. Senators are not responsible, they are not elected, they never have to face the public and, as was noted in the Clarke-Campbell report, many Senators are engaged in outside occupations. Basically they are lawyers and directors; they represent other interests in the land than that of the electorate. They are completely unanswerable. We have no idea what they do on behalf of their corporations, law firms or advertising firms. We have no idea what they do on behalf of their other occupations. We pay them a full-time salary, yet it was recognized by the committee, headed by a former Liberal Member of Parliament and a former Conservative Member of Parliament, that many of them, indeed most of them, were engaged in outside occupations.

Obviously those on boards of directors of various firms who sit in the Conservative caucus, now that that Party is in Government—and the same was true for those who sat in the Liberal caucus when that Party was in Government—have a strong influence on policies, directions, legislation and regulations coming from Government. We never know what is being said. We know that a certain Senator sits on the board of Inco and that a certain Senator sits on the board of directors of the Bank of Montreal. We know that Senators sit on the boards of this corporation or that corporation, but we have no idea what they say to their friends in Cabinet or how they use their voice and vote in caucus. This means that the Senate works against mob rule, democracy and openness in Government.

I recognize that I have very little time remaining, but I should like to deal with the real role of the Senate as perceived by many people, that is, to give sober second thought to legislation which we may rush through the House of Commons. It is obvious to anyone who has studied the role, function and performance of the Senate that it does not do that. The average Bill is in the Senate for less than three days. The Clarke-Campbell report indicated that on average the Senate, over the last six years, sat for 66 per cent of the number of days the House of Commons sat. Most of us in the House will remember situations such as the following one: a controversial piece of legislation is debated in the House for weeks, if not for months; it is sent to a special or standing committee before which witnesses from all across the land appear. In some cases the committee will actually travel across country. After hearing the evidence and studying the Bill on a clause by clause basis, sometimes it makes amendments, sometimes it improves the Bill, and then it is brought back to the House of Commons for further debate. Thereafter it is rushed over to the Senate where it passes all stages in two hours. That is sober second thought! Obviously it is not.

I propose the abolition of the Senate. I will not move a resolution to that affect. Everyone knows where the New Democratic Party stands. However, we really do not have a Senate at the present time. It has not really existed in the

minds of Canadians for the last hundred years. It does not exist in terms of any effective role or in terms of legislative overview, with or without the amendments the Government is putting before us at this time. Let me indicate how I know this to be true.

● (1540)

I would like to read into the record the length of time that the Senate has sat in the five-week period between April 23 and May 30, 1985. As all Members know, the Senate only sits three days a week. On April 23, the Senate sat for one hour and 10 minutes. On April 24, it sat for one hour and 40 minutes; one hour and five minutes on April 25; two hours and five minutes on April 30; 20 minutes on May 1; one hour and 20 minutes on May 2; one hour and 20 minutes on May 7; one hour and 15 minutes on May 8; one hour and 45 minutes on May 9; one hour and 20 minutes on May 14; one hour and 40 minutes on May 15; one hour and 40 minutes on May 16; 50 minutes on May 28; one hour on May 29 and 30, respectively.

These are the figures for five consecutive weeks in which the Senate sat. They are certainly not construed figures. The total comes to 20 hours. We have been told that we have to spend \$30,000 an hour to keep the people in the Senate. They do not even believe themselves that there is any need for them to review legislation. They do not believe that they have any real purpose. They can barely get through their prayers before they adjourn for the day. They do not serve as a Chamber of sober second thought. They do not serve any real legislative purpose; and they have not done so for a long time. Let us rid ourselves of the house of patronage. Let us clean up our democratic system and put in place one House which is elected by and responsible to the people of Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[Translation]

**Mr. Valcourt:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague of the New Democratic Party. Considering the remarks he has just made and the fact the the other House sat only 20 hours during five consecutive weeks; considering that, by his own logic, the Canadian Senate is of no practical use to this country and yet has an absolute right of veto on any piece of legislation passed by the House of Commons, could he explain how he can logically be against this resolution aimed at vesting the Senate with only a suspensive veto? The Hon. Member ought to know that if we want to abolish the Senate, as the New Democratic Party would have it, we need a consensus in this country, and any reasonable person—even a Member of the New Democratic Party—would realize there is now way to achieve such a consensus.

So how can he be against that, at least if the Senate had only a suspensive veto it could not thwart the will of the elected Commons.

[English]

**Mr. Murphy:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Hon. Member asked that particular question. It gives me a chance to go on