

● (1550)

That being said, I am not sure I can agree with the Hon. Members for Windsor West and Kamloops—Shuswap that two Parties in opposition alone can form the basis of an agreement that would compel a Minister of the Crown to act under Standing Order 116. Just so the Hon. Members and the public understand, if that proposition were accepted by the Chair it would mean that two opposition parties, or three opposition parties, or whatever number of opposition parties could form an agreement to decide on how many days of debate would continue on any given Bill, and the Government would thereby be bound by that agreement. All three Standing Orders, that is 115, 116 and 117—and they all deal with the question of how to handle the time allocation at various stages of debate on a Bill—in their opening sentences clearly leave the initiative of announcing any agreement or no agreement to a Minister. It is my view that a Minister must be party to any agreement and that rising in his or her place under Standing Order 115 or 116 to take any initiative means that he or she is supportive of the proposed proposal for time allocation.

Standing Order 117 provides for a Minister to act if there is no agreement and, as I stated on June 6, 1988, the Chair must take a Minister's declaration at face value and cannot judge the quality of negotiations or of any proposals that may have been made. In this case I was not even asked to judge on the quality of the negotiations because there is a document that indicates the arrangement at least had been entered into with two of the Parties in the House, albeit, not that of the Government.

As a consequence, I have to rule that the notice was in order and the motion is receivable.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CANADA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

#### ALLOCATION OF TIME TO CONSIDER REPORT IN THIRD READING STAGES OF BILL C-130

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of State and Minister of State (Treasury Board))** moved:

That, in relation to Bill C-130, an Act to implement the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States of America, not more than two further sitting days shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage, and two sitting days to the consideration of the third reading stage of the Bill; and

That fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government business on the second day allotted to report stage consideration and on the second day allotted to third reading stage consideration of the said Bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required, for the purpose of this order and, in turn, every question necessary in order to dispose of the stage of the Bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

**Mr. Speaker:** I remind Hon. Members that this is a debatable motion, and I will hear Hon. Members.

## Time Allocation

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to explain fully the Government's position and to explain why we are moving to time allocation in this particular instance.

There are four or five reasons. First, it is fair to say that there have been numerous statements by Opposition Members that they have intended from day one to delay the Bill, the legislation, as long as possible, not to correct or amend but to delay as long as possible at any cost.

Second, I would point to the manoeuvres by the Right Hon. Leader of the Liberal Party to trade power by the elected representatives of the people for power by the Senate in asking the Senate to delay forever the Bill, or at least until a general election is called.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I refer you to the delays in the past week or so. In fact, last Wednesday the entire day was wasted by votes on the introduction of Private Members' Bills to which government Members were naturally pleased to assent because we hold the view that every Member should have the right to introduce his or her Bill and have it read for the first time.

I also refer you to last Friday's recorded division on whether or not the House would move to the business of the day and thus debate of Bill C-130 at report stage. As well I refer you to yesterday from eleven o'clock in the morning until one o'clock when the Opposition pulled the same manoeuvre by introducing a Private Member's Bill and then having the last three rows of the New Democrats say "no" and the first two rows say "yes" in order to trigger a recorded division and waste the time of the House.

I also refer you to the remarks of the Leader of the New Democratic Party on the CBC radio program *The House* on July 23, when the point was made by the interviewer that the New Democratic Party was opposed to free trade. The interviewer said:

"Yet watching the debate in the House of Commons and elsewhere, the message seems to be lost on people."

In reply the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) said:

"I think that around here amongst politicians because it has been debated for so long and we know the arguments in one sense on both sides so well that there can be amongst journalists, amongst some MPs, some jaded, "I've been through this so many times" perspective."

Those words are very helpful from the Leader of the New Democratic Party in making the case.

Yesterday, as soon as the bell rang on the first vote to see if we would introduce and print a Private Member's Bill, I went to the House Leaders of the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party and asked them if they could give me some idea of the amount of time required at report stage and at third reading stage in order to dispose of the Bill. That was an honest bona fide effort to elicit a reasonable timetable from the Opposition as required under Standing Order 117. I received the following letter from the coalition Party. I have read this letter into the record, and it is very specific. It says that the two Opposition Parties: