

Time Allocation

dictates. It is the cost of money at the bank that is causing prices in the country to drop, and that is a known economic fact.

I want to say at the outset of this debate that I oppose the way Standing Order 75 is being used, and the motion before us is a perfect example of my point. The House of Commons is a debating forum. Its purpose is to bring forward, from the government and the opposition, points of view on legislation before the House. If a matter before the House is complex and is the cause of concern and controversy in the country, the hon. members are required to convey those concerns in the House in debate. If a member is on the government side, he tends to look upon all remarks by opposition members as obstruction, as a means of stringing out the process and as a means of fouling the government's legislative timetable. On the other hand, opposition members many times must wrestle with legislative language that is obscure, which in many cases requires considerable research, which is poorly drafted, with loopholes through which one could drive a Mack truck and which is based on wrong-headed, immature and biased information and opinion, as we see in Bill C-124 and Bill C-53, to name two current bills.

Standing Order 75C was placed in our House business procedures to allow the government to bring to an end a debate which had run beyond a reasonable time. It was not intended that a complex bill be entered on the Order Paper and scheduled for debate and, within two hours, time allocation placed on that bill. That is using the rule book as a sledgehammer.

There is no reason in the world why the House of Commons cannot work to a proper legislative timetable. There should be a set timetable for the House to convene, a period of recess for Christmas and New Year's, a short break at Easter and a pre-determined recess date. It then becomes the government's problem to fit its legislative program into that time-frame. There would have to be provision for emergencies which require parliamentary action. Anyone who examines the process presently in use has to agree that the quality of debate would be vastly improved if we had to work to a parliamentary time schedule.

Having said that, let me deal with the matter at hand. The government introduced Bill C-124, which has a wide and sweeping effect on the economy. Even before the bill has passed, we are being told by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the PMO that if this bill does not work, then full wage and price controls will be legislated. The Prime Minister has even gone further, stating that if the provisions of Bill C-124 fail and wage and price controls fail, then the economy will collapse.

The truth of the matter is that one picture is painted by legislation—Bill C-124—and another by the Prime Minister. A third picture is presented to business and labour leaders when they meet behind cabinet doors with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) and his officials. In other words, we have an economic situation that is bad news, very bad news and potential economic disaster. The longer we stay here and debate, the more likely it is that those "private

details," spoken about only behind doors with selected groups, will become public knowledge.

As hon. members know, the budget forecasts a deficit of \$19.6 billion, but the deficit is based on a turnaround in the economy in the third and fourth quarters. No one in the private sector with whom I have talked has forecast a bottoming out or a turnaround for at least 18 months. The question which begs to be asked is, what will the deficit be if there is no turnaround in the third and fourth quarters? I believe information is being given to those persons meeting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance which is not intended for the public.

It has been speculated that the deficit could climb to \$25 billion or \$28 billion. If that proves to be true, we could face economic collapse. I hope that speculation remains only speculation and that the provisions of Bill C-124 are adequate to bring some order to a deteriorating economy. However, I do not believe the people of Canada are being well served when the truth of the gravity of the situation we face is held from them.

When the Prime Minister states that the people of Canada demanded high interest rates and that is why the government had to pay 19.5 per cent interest on Canada Savings Bonds, I believe that is an abuse of the truth. Equally, when the government, through the Prime Minister, intervenes in the market process through regulations designed as fine tuning and then declares that the enterprise system is not working, that also is an abuse of the truth. When the government refuses to curb its own expenditures, through sleight-of-hand rhetoric states it is curbing employment and then hires an additional 8,000 people in the first quarter on this year, that is deception which borders on contempt. When the government blames wage demands on labour as the cause of inflation when in fact it is a reaction to inflation, that is bending the truth and inflaming an already precarious situation.

It is because the government is firmly committed to intervening continually in the marketplace and believes it can only spend its way out of inflation that we will continue to have difficulties. Had the government dealt directly with those problems in the last few months, then perhaps we would be recessing this House on a positive note and a plan would be in place to alleviate the economic difficulties we face. But that is not the case. Instead, we are presented with a poorly drafted bill, the scope of which keeps changing with each succeeding question period. For these reasons, I oppose the imposition of Standing Order 75C in this debate.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Gimaiel (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity this afternoon to speak to Bill C-124, or rather to the motion of closure or Standing Order 75C, if you prefer, because I think it is high time Canadians were told the truth about such things as why we want to limit the duration of this debate and what is the major reason why the government and Liberal members are anxious to introduce time allocation. There are a number of reasons. Obviously, this