

Time Allocation

Well, it seems there may be an election pretty soon. It doesn't matter whether the Bill is good or bad. The Government must be able to go before Canadians and say it has fulfilled its mandate. Quebecers, however, should wonder why the Government waited so long. Why did it wait until the very last minute—we want to introduce this Bill we just happened to overlook! I really have the impression that someone must have looked at their election platform and their promises, then reached the conclusion that a number of important items had been forgotten and, in the end-of-session panic decided to get those last promises through the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a healthy way to operate in a parliamentary democracy. The Government had four years and a month to schedule the implementation of its election promises.

• (1320)

[English]

This Government had four years, four long years, to implement this piece of legislation. Here we are, almost at the very last minute of the last two weeks—maybe, as my colleague from the third Party is saying—when the Government seems to have reopened the book of its promises of 1984 and realized that it has forgotten a few items in it, not to say many, and therefore will force, ram through the House of Commons, this issue.

I can imagine a Cabinet session where the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and his Cabinet instruct Mr. Lewis, the Deputy House Leader, by saying “I don't care how you do it, ram this through the House because we may call the election”. Who knows? Maybe Mr. Bourassa will call a provincial election. If such were the case, then there would be no federal election. That is what I heard this morning, and I will not give too much credit to that. But anything can happen.

Why is there this sudden urgency? It is a bad Bill. How can everybody who is involved in this subject matter be opposed to it? I am not an expert in this domain, but I hope I have enough intelligence to understand that everybody who is involved in this subject matter should oppose the Bill.

I know that in my district, especially the new one, I will most likely have the honour to run in the next election. I was already chosen there on May 1 with over a thousand people in attendance without being opposed, on a Sunday afternoon, with all my provincial Liberal friends present—two Ministers plus a few others, plus the municipal councillor. It just shows that sometimes in Montreal we can work together. In that district, this subject matter is extremely important and I am very sensitive to this subject matter.

My father was a doctor, and he delivered over 9,000 babies. Many of them are now having babies in my district. But since my father's days, society has changed dramatically. Society has changed unbelievably. Some people cannot adjust to these changes.

We may like to revert back to the good old days of yesterday, but we cannot. I see these single parents having to cope with working, being on welfare, and having and raising children. It is extremely difficult. It is extremely difficult in the kind of area where I live. They cannot cope with that. They are discouraged. They do not understand why a rich society like Canada cannot have a tough first-class day care system for our future citizens.

I keep saying that this is the best investment that we can make. If we want to have a prosperous Canada, a good Canada, a new Canada, we must have a very strong population. Youth must be capable of replacing us. But they will have to face a greater difficulty than we have known, than my friend from Alberta has known, than we have all known in our youth. It was easier for us in our youth. But not today.

We must help these people who are most in need of help. We must provide for them the quality and the care that is expected in a civilized country like Canada.

I regret to say that we do not see this help in this project. It is long forgotten. It was put forward to the Canadian people in 1984 and it was suddenly reinvented on the very eve of an election. I do not like the urgency of ramming it through the House as it is being done now, after very little debate and after no consultation. After having rejected every plea of every expert in the domain, the Government intends to go ahead anyway. I do not think that that is good, and it does not reflect the spirit of the reform that we have had in the House of Commons.

Therefore, I will definitely vote against the fact that this Bill is being imposed so rapidly on the House of Commons, without having any real and honest debate and any real consultation, and without flexibility from the Government to listen to those who oppose it. A lot of these experts should not be taken for fools. They know what they are talking about, and they oppose the Bill. If they all collectively opposed the Bill, I do not see how I could give my consent to that Bill.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to join in this debate on time allocation.

The Conservative Government, I think, will go down in history as a four-year Government.

Mr. Hawkes: Wishful thinking.

Mr. Angus: It is a Government which was only elected for four years, but a Government which wasted a lot of time throughout those four years by not dealing with commitments that it made to the people of Canada while deciding at the last minute to rush a number of things through. Child care legislation is one such example. We did not get it until the summer, in a session that was not supposed to happen in the first place. Once again, because of government mismanagement of the business of the Commons, it was unable to bring forward any kind of concrete action until the eleventh hour. That action that it brought forward is flawed.