

this bill, which I am certain was drafted with the intent to save the Canadian taxpayers' money, will result in additional expenditure of more of the Canadian taxpayers' money.

It is on these grounds that I cannot support this legislation, but I would like to commend the hon. member for Vaudreuil for his efforts in this regard. Unfortunately, I find that the costs of the implementation and the direction of this proposal are simply too prohibitive.

Mr. D. M. Collenette (York East): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I was detained a few moments ago and did not have the benefit of listening to the arguments put forward by my colleague, the hon. member for Kitchener (Mr. Flynn).

An hon. Member: A copy is in the research office.

Mr. Collenette: I am sure that the points he made were very valid, but I detected from what he said that he is against the bill. This is the second night in a row that I have risen in private members' hour to support my colleague, the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) in what I consider to be a very worth-while suggestion incorporated in bill form. As we can see, the purpose of the bill is to ensure a more adequate cost accountability in the production and dissemination of government documents and reports.

Since I came to Ottawa three years ago, I have been struck with the amount of paperwork that comes across a member's desk. In fact, I have here a few publications which I can show to the cameras, if they want it. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am just being facetious. Some of the material that comes across our desks is very expensively produced, not just the photographs but the other art work and writing, and I am sure that much money is needlessly wasted in the dissemination of these various reports. It seems to me that we are entering a new phase in our society where the public is at last concerned about where all their dollars go. I think it is safe to say that in the post-war years we have experienced an expanding role of government, and certainly I have supported the expanding role of government to bring very much needed social services to the majority of Canadians.

It has been inevitable, I think, that the role of government in society has been expanded. But along with this expansion has come the inevitable growth of the bureaucracy to support the activities of increased government intervention in society. As a result we have seen, perhaps, that the real accounting of government has not been as proficient as it should be. This has been brought out, I believe, in the reports of the Auditor General going back a number of years. Certainly, the most recent Auditor General was quite critical of government spending. I see one of my colleagues in the opposition chuckling with glee at my position. It is certainly not an anti-government position. I think it is incumbent on members on both sides of the House to ensure that the people of Canada get full value for the tax dollars that are spent.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Public Reports

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You are jeopardizing your chance to become a parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Collenette: I did not hear all the arguments against the bill advanced by my colleague, the hon. member for Kitchener, but I understand that one of the basic arguments from the government's point of view is that the enactment of this legislation would perhaps create needless duplication and would not be in the best interests of the public. But from my experience on the Hill, I feel that it would be in the interests of the House and in the interests of the people of Canada if members on both sides allowed this bill to go to committee after second reading.

Mr. Robert Daudlin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I, like the hon. member for York East (Mr. Collenette), stand in my place for the second time in as many days this week to speak on a bill that has been put forward by the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert). I should start by complimenting the hon. member for bringing to the attention of the House last night not only the motion regarding education, but the problem tonight which has struck me probably as much as, if not more than, any other problem since I came to this place.

From the time of my arrival at the House it has become more and more painfully obvious that a single person cannot keep pace with the volume of material, the reports upon reports, the summaries of reports, and the two-page documents describing reports, that come across a member's desk day after day. Indeed, one is struck, as well, as the hon. member for York East pointed out, with the quality of the reports and one asks oneself what they must have cost. I am sure that you, Mr. Speaker, as other members of the House, have seen from time to time the beautiful, glossy prints, the heavy bond paper and the photographs and wondered about their cost.

I am satisfied that not all of them are in the public domain or come from the public archives, but indeed we have artistry which requires a high cost to be incurred in order to make use of these documents.

● (1722)

We find very much difficulty using the process of the estimates to determine from a department what the cost of a particular item was, for the reason that it becomes, if not overtly, then by reason of intent or by sheer necessity, somehow lost in the figures which represent the publication costs of that department. Indeed, those costs might be almost irretrievable as a result of having been produced by an agency of a particular department.

However, one becomes struck with what the cost of those documents must be, and the unfortunate thing is that a number of them never really achieve the end for which they were produced, which is to communicate the ideas contained in them. All of us in this place recognize the problem of having too much on our desks to be able to make valid use of the materials, and as a consequence we become selective readers. It becomes almost a painful process to have these beautiful