

Government Orders

folded into the Department of National Defence, the kind of approach the member recommended earlier, or combining functions of organizations such as merging the Procurement Review Board of Canada with the Canadian International Trade Tribunal.

When these decisions were announced the *Ottawa Citizen* wrote an editorial congratulating the government: "Yuletide is a traditional season of political patronage appointments with a generous distribution of partisan favours at public expense, so it is especially happy news that 314 patronage positions have just been abolished by the Chrétien government".

It goes on to point out that not all these boards are bad and that patronage sometimes serves a good purpose: "Boards and commissions can do work beyond the competence of the public service sometimes and patronage in its place can allow a government to choose the people it wants to execute policies it was elected to advance. Jean Chrétien's ministers are right to scrutinize these governor in council positions, all 3,000 or them, one by one", which is what we are doing. "If patronage appointments are not doing something essential to the public interest or doing it better than public servants could, the positions should be eliminated".

That is the criterion we have employed.

In conclusion, the agency review was conducted in conjunction with a number of other reviews, including the program review which has examined federal programs and services as well as policy reviews.

This process of examination will not come to an end with the formal completion of the agency review but will, members have suggested earlier, continue as an integral part of providing Canadian taxpayers with value for their money.

We know the importance of meeting our commitment to provide Canadians with good government. Improving how our nation is governed remains a priority with this government.

The bill before us makes sensible changes in a reasonable way while ensuring national interest is served. It will result in administrative savings and increased efficiency and delivery of government. I would urge hon. members to ensure speedy passage of this legislation because it is the kind of bill that all members can support. The *Ottawa Citizen* said in December: "Marcel Massé is on the right side. He is on the side of fairness, flexibility and efficiency in government".

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Kitchener for his very well reasoned, prepared speech. It was well delivered.

I want to say something about this farm analogy which occurred to me the instant he said it. He indicated that he thought Reformers, after the pail was full of milk, would then kick over the pail—not so. We are more committed than anybody around here to very carefully carrying that pail because it is not our milk. It belongs to the taxpayers.

Also, the thought occurred to me that before they kneel down on the stool beside the cow, they are forgetting to check whether the pail has a bottom. Theirs does not. When putting \$120 billion a year into the government coffers as Canadian taxpayers are and there is \$160 billion coming out of the bottom, we know the hole at the bottom is larger than the input at the top. That is an item of great concern.

I want to ask the member to respond to a question having to do with the urgency of reducing the deficit. Does he acknowledge—I know he cannot speak for the other members of his party—that the leadership of that party is an item of great concern to thinking Canadians because of the rapidly growing debt? Even if they are on target they are going to be adding roughly \$80 billion to \$100 billion to the debt before this Parliament is finished. Even very modest interest rates of 5 per cent indicate an additional cost of \$5 billion per year. Just having the debt grow at this rate adds basically one-eighth to our present deficit without any additional programs being financed.

• (1550)

What I would like to hear just one Liberal member say is it is time they attack this, attack it vigorously and quickly and very effectively to get government spending down.

Mr. English: Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the member when he sees the budget when it is produced probably later this month will see that this government is serious about the deficit. We have given every indication in public statements by the Prime Minister, in statements by the Minister of Finance who has engaged in a very long process of consultation, longer than any other consultation by previous finance ministers. He has done so with a commitment to fighting this deficit and of course by implication the debt.

In terms of the debate about various animals there is a difficulty with the Reform Party's approach to government and we can talk about *Animal Farm*. There is a slogan in that book: "Two legs good, four legs bad". What I find troubling, with respect, about the criticisms of agencies which I heard from the hon. member for Elk Island is that all the agencies were lumped together.

If we actually look at the list of agencies affected by this legislation we see that some of them are essential. As I said before the National Archives of Canada advisory board decides independently apart from the bureaucracy what documents must