

*Closing Expo 1967 Corporation*

rental of an apartment for six months. The CBC, which the government says is usually very careful in its expenditures, was not to be outdone. It contracted for guaranteed accommodation for 1967 in three Montreal hotels. This accommodation remained unoccupied 24 per cent, 48 per cent and 50 per cent respectively of the time, at a cost of \$148,000, including a termination fee of \$18,900 for premises that were unused.

Did you ever hear, Mr. Speaker, of a gravy train like this? As long as you were aboard it you could spend regardless of whether there was justification. At the same time that these hotel facilities were not being used, the CBC rented accommodation in other hotels costing approximately \$40,000. The CBC paid \$450,000 to employees for what was called scheduled hours during daily or weekly tours of duty which were in excess of the actual hours of attendance.

It is an amazing record, Mr. Speaker. These are but a few examples of expenditures made. The report also deals with the other losses. Of the assets that were simply written off, Canada was assessed \$116,794,000. The Centennial Commission got off lightly with a spectacular—but, of course, I am not going to go into that because it was not part of the fair.

What I have placed before you, Mr. Speaker, is a record that is unequalled anywhere, any place in Canada, for wild, uncontrolled expenditure. The minister says that I thought we ought to spend a little more if all that was going to be spent was \$20 million. But the losses were colossal. Control of expenditure was non-existent.

The government now comes along and says, in effect: "Let's forget all about it; it was a wonderful event". And it was. But that is not what we are dealing with at the moment. We are dealing with the right of the people's representatives in Parliament to control a government that exercised no control over the purse strings placed in the hands of the Commission. The government has found a nice, easy way of ending the affair. There will be an Expo Winding-Up Act, and all rights of creditors and all actions pending are unimpaired by the transfer to the minister of the assets.

The purpose of the bill is to provide for the dissolution of the Canadian Corporation. Clause 7 provides:

There may be deleted from the accounts of Canada, as a portion of the deficit of the corporation that is to be borne by the government of

Canada, not more than one hundred and twenty-five million dollars of the amounts shown therein as Accounts Receivable Expo Guarantees.

The government will push this measure through. Parliament no longer has any authority. There is a supine membership that stands behind the government whether it be right or wrong—though the government is always right. This measure should not receive the support of this House. To support it is to place the seal of approval on the most unprecedented and wildest expenditures made in all of Canada's history, with the taxpayer of Canada required to pick up the bill.

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) has taken part in the debate. "La grande histoire", and "la petite histoire", would not have been complete without his participation. I am sure that whoever writes the history of Expo will quote the words of the right hon. gentleman, that it was the "greatest orgy in expenditures in the history of mankind".

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** No, I said in the history of Canada.

**Mr. Pepin:** In the history of Canada, then.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** As usual, the minister is too expansive.

**Mr. Pepin:** I can think of a number of people who would turn in their graves because they thought they held the record.

I do not intend to reply point by point because many of the matters raised by the right hon. gentleman have already been dealt with in the committee. Although I understand they were not dealt with to the full satisfaction of some members of the committee, explanations were nevertheless provided, and quite graciously accepted in many instances.

I pointed out during the committee hearings that there were a number of safeguards in the original legislation, some of which originated from the right hon. gentleman's cabinet. These safeguards were the master plan, the annual budget, the decisions of the boards that had to be approved by the two governments in Ottawa and Quebec, the annual report and the observations of the Auditor General. I might also underline the fact that the loans made to the Corporation were approved by Parliament in the Appropriation Act in the year in which they were made, and