

*Company of Young Canadians Act**[Translation]*

class". This matter was brought to the government's attention and the Prime Minister of the day, Prime Minister Pearson, admitted at that time that he never thought all those mistakes would be made. I ask, Mr. Chairman, what else can you expect when you form a company of young people without any ground rules, priorities, qualifications or necessary ingredients for the setting up of a company of this sort if it is to do the work it should do?

The government was warned by the Leader of the Opposition, who asked for a full probe into the Company's work. The hon. member for Guelph also brought the matter to the attention of the House, as I did, by referring to the article I alluded to that had been written in 1957. But the matter was glossed over and nothing was done to correct the problem until Mr. Saulnier made his appeal, saying that the Company was linked with groups supported and financed by foreign powers not sharing our views. All this is pretty sad and the government is responsible for this blot on the collective escutcheon of our young people. After all, the government permitted this to happen. It set up this Company without laying down any framework, priorities or aims.

I do not believe that there can be a resurrection of the CYC. The resurrection can only occur within the consciences of members of the Company, because the damaging picture is there for all to see. I do not believe that those who had bad reputations in the CYC should be allowed to tarnish the efforts of any new members because newcomers should not work under the handicap of previous mistakes in trying to renovate the present Company. In my opinion, Mr. Chairman, it would be completely wrong of us to saddle any new group of youngsters with an albatross of previous corruption and wrongdoing with which they were not connected.

Perhaps the kindest thing I can say is this: the company was created from an ideal, and the dream ended as a sad delusion. In the light of the Wards Island disaster and the fiasco over the week end, we should consider the timing of the wake. Infectious moral problems must be treated radically and obliterated as soon as possible. Parliament ought to correct the mistake it made when it passed the bill setting up this company without specifying what regulations or qualifications should govern it or the people enlisted to serve with the company.

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, we are now studying Bill C-171 designed to appoint a financial comptroller to the Company of Young Canadians, together with an amendment moved by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) who would rather have us appoint somebody with the sole power of countersigning cheques than give dictatorial powers, to use his own words, to a comptroller over the Company of Young Canadians.

I must admit that the hon. member for York South did not come up in his plea with very strong arguments. I have much esteem for him as a lawyer as he pleads his cases very skilfully and very subtly. I suspect him to have some sort of afterthought, in the most acceptable sense of the term. Even though his arguments do not seem to have much weight, he has in mind a conclusion he does not dare pass on to the House.

In any event, as a layman, I do not see much difference between the appointment of a financial comptroller and the appointment of someone who can sign cheques, because finally if he wants to do this signing properly he will have to look into all the activities of the Company of Young Canadians. He will all the same be able to use his right of veto. It seems to me we are being driven from the frying pan into the fire and that someone is trying to get us to use the old expression: much of a muchness.

Most hon. members have probably felt at one time or another a certain heartbreak as they were to speak in the House. Within themselves, as I do this evening, they are probably saying: I am convinced it is urgent to vote in favour of this bill so that a comptroller be appointed to watch over the Company's finances, because the situation is so very complicated. In practice, I do not think that could happen, but, in theory at least, some 900,000 could be squandered, more or less, in a matter of hours.

The government is being wise in asking the House to act quickly. Personally, I know that the matter is urgent and that I would be failing in my duty as a member if I did not express, in this debate, the view of my constituents, that is of the municipal boards, the welfare associations, the social services and the town-planning services. As a matter of fact, they have been supplying me with documents for over a year.