

Supply

about their expenditure plans for public funds. We do not see the backroom manipulators in the Prime Minister's Office before standing committees. We do not have a chance to ask them about their expenditure plans. There are line Ministers who come before the committee. We vote funds that are to be spent by those line Ministers for the purpose of their budgets. It is quite disappointing and shocking to discover that the expenditure of line departmental budgets is being determined by political Ministers.

• (1310)

I remind Members that in Canada today three of those political Ministers come from the Senate rather than the House of Commons. They do not have the authority that is vested in people who go through an electoral process. Is it right that people with that kind of mandate should be telling line Ministers how to spend a portion of their budget? It is similar to their being puppets. It is like turning line Ministers in the Government into eunuchs or puppets that do what they are told by political Ministers from the Senate in terms of their budgets which they were given through the democratic process in the House of Commons. It is a violation of basic principles and a plot worthy of the backroom manipulators in the Prime Minister's Office.

When dealing with communication about these projects, the first principle is to maintain secrecy until all decisions are made. At that time the signs are displayed and announcements from political Ministers about the funding are made. This is so they can take the credit. That is part of the communication plan. While it is kept secret from Members of Parliament and other Canadians, perhaps it can be shared with the presidents of riding associations of particular political persuasions. However, do not share it with all Members of Parliament. Who devised that plan? It came from a representative of the Prime Minister's Office meeting with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde).

Do Members in this Chamber feel that the Minister of Finance is the key player in the development of a communications strategy for the expenditure of \$150 million that involves 15 Departments and is the administrative responsibility of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration? What on earth is the Minister of Finance doing developing a communication plan with a representative of the Prime Minister's Office? What facts are there to show Canadians and Members of Parliament that the process is one in which the Minister of Finance is in charge of asserting a communications strategy for the expenditure of \$150 million of public funds? It is very unusual. I suggest that this allocation of \$150 million a year is very peculiar. It is a secret slush fund. The employment it creates is a by-product of its basic purpose, which is the use of taxpayers' money for the political manipulation of the Canadian population.

This has always been the danger in the Government's approach to employment creation funds. If the Government is in the direct job-creation business, it should have advisory committees comprised of local people who decide who will and

who will not get a job. Any other system would simply put temptation into the hands of political Ministers. This secret \$300 million slush fund is the clearest demonstration in my parliamentary career of the lack of wisdom in the present allocation process.

In 1981 I wrote to the Auditor General of Canada to suggest that a special audit on the methods of job fund allocation be undertaken at that time. That need is even more evident today. The Auditor General, as the servant of the House, is the only appropriate and unbiased source who has the legal and statutory authority to look into the question of whether funds voted by the House have been legally and properly spent with due regard to economy and efficiency. I hope that representatives of the Auditor General's office are listening to the debate today or perhaps reading the newspaper as this issue unfolds. I suggest that it is time for at least that inquiry.

If the Government believes that this is not a secret slush fund, that it is not susceptible to backroom manipulation from the Prime Minister's Office and if the Government believes it is appropriate for political Ministers to tell line Ministers how to spend their budgets, then why does the Government House Leader not stand this afternoon and make a recommendation for a public inquiry into the methods of deciding the expenditure of funds in the Special Employment Incentives Program and its immediate predecessor? If there is nothing to hide, then one would think that the Government would be anxious to clear its reputation by establishing such an all-parliamentary group and giving it the power to conduct a full and impartial inquiry.

It is time that we as Members of Parliament took our responsibilities seriously. It is time for the Government to permit us to fulfil those responsibilities. It is time for a public inquiry into the methods employed by the Liberal Party in the allocation of these particular employment creation funds.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Questions, comments and answers? Debate.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take up the challenge issued by the previous speaker and be very specific about job-creation programs. I will identify and quote from specific material and I think the House will realize that there is something quite wrong with the allocation of these grants.

I conducted my own inquiry into the methods of allocation with respect to one particular grant. It pertains to this debate because our finance critic, the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis), has included in his motion a condemnation of the Government for "allocating job-creation funds in a partisan fashion not based upon local employment levels".

I want to refer to a grant of \$583,000 that was given to a group in Toronto allegedly to conduct social services. However, as I go through this material it will become evident what it is really for. The group is called the Canadian Alliance for Italian Integration and Culture. They call themselves the