

• (1620)

The federal government receives only \$600 million or so annually for the provision by the RCMP of provincial and municipal police services which cost between \$900 and \$950 million per year. So, the balance sheet looks like this: real cost of services: \$900 to \$950 million; revenues: \$600 million; the federal government's share: between \$300 and \$350 million. Quebec's share—and I think it is important for my hon. friends opposite to hear it—is 24 per cent of the total, or between \$70 and \$90 million. That is what Quebec pays for services which it does not get, or worse still, for a service that it already pays the provincial government and the municipalities to provide. This is one blatant example of how federalism is costly to Quebec.

The federal shortfall, as I mentioned earlier, totals \$300 million annually. If we calculate on a twenty-year basis, because the agreement covers a span of twenty years, the shortfall amounts to roughly \$6 billion. In other words, Quebec taxpayers subsidize provincial and municipal police services in the other provinces, excluding Ontario of course, as I said earlier, to the tune of between \$70 and \$90 million per year, or between \$1.4 and \$1.8 billion over the term of the agreement. More than 40 per cent of Canadians receive police services that are subsidized by Quebec and Ontario residents. Some provinces benefit more than others. For instance, a large portion of British Columbia has no police force other than the national force which provides service at both the municipal and provincial levels.

In conclusion, what the Official Opposition is calling for is a committee which would examine this area and determine if overlap exists and whether a province is paying for a service it is not receiving. I think the government, if it is truly realistic and honest about what it wants to do, should go along with the Official Opposition's proposal to review, item by item, the cost of national police services. And this is only one area, one under the responsibility of the Solicitor General of Canada. If we were to look at all departments, we would see how much money the provinces, and Quebec in particular, pay out for services they do not receive.

[English]

**Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey):** Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the opposition for addressing the matter of whether or not we should set up a separate committee for finances.

I remind the hon. member that he said he was trying to eliminate duplication. The very nature of what he is proposing actually is duplication.

There is no question that the Auditor General's report is a significant document. I hope every department will use it as a

*Supply*

tool to try to get rid of those deficiencies as alluded to by the hon. member.

Canada is a Confederation, not a unitary state. As the member put it Canada is not a country of states that do not care for one another. Those provinces that are doing quite well assist the other provinces through equalization payments and so on. This is unique. We enjoy a good status in the world. We are respected. We enjoy a high standard of living. Our kind of democracy and our kind of government are examples for many countries.

To separate or to tear the country apart is the subliminal message coming from the members of the opposition. It is probably not a very good way. I can say that quite firmly coming from a country where independence was achieved. After independence our standard of living went down and was not as good as we thought it would be. We ended up with a great deal of enemies. We thought they were not our enemies but economically they were bigger and forced more kinds of restraints on us.

To get back to the question we are debating today, we do need to look very seriously at government records and the way it spends its money, but the mechanism is already there. We have government and opposition members to do this. That is the mechanism we should be using in order to achieve those goals.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bellehumeur:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his four questions or observations. I will start with the first one.

• (1625)

What the Official Opposition is asking for is a committee which would look at where taxpayers' money goes. Quebec pays billions of dollars every year, the pretext being that it is truly getting value for its money. We have heard that tune many times from the members opposite.

I gave one very specific example of an area where Quebec pays without getting value for its money. We could look at other cases as well. If the hon. member is truly sincere about what he wants to do, he should agree to our proposal and we will get the final word. We want to know who pays and how much, where the money goes and why.

Second, the ideal thing would be for each department to examine the Auditor General's report and make it bedtime reading. Then, every night, the horror stories uncovered by the Auditor General would be recalled and efforts would be made to correct them. Of course, this is just wishful thinking. Every year, the same thing happens. If we did not talk about the Auditor General's report, no one would. The government wants it to be swept under the rug.

Third, I do not think that Canada should be held up as an example for other countries to follow, considering that in just the one small area that I mentioned, namely the national police