

*Refitting of HMCS "Bonaventure"*

graph 54, some remarks are made about the CBC's revenues and expenditures. Here is an extract from the report:

Salaries and wages paid for work not performed.

In previous reports, we have referred to payments aggregating approximately \$450,000 per annum by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to employees for scheduled hours during daily or weekly tours of duty which were in excess of the actual hours of attendance.

And this happened at the CBC, an agency that I like, but I like even better still to acquaint the Canadian citizens with it.

The payments were made in accordance with the provisions of the various union agreements and the Corporation regarded payment of compensation calculated in this manner as proper—

—still, the work was not done—

—having regard to the effect of scheduling requirements for its present studio facilities, the availability of artists, the exigencies of actuality broadcasts and the nature of broadcast program production.

Mr. Speaker, fantastic amounts are spent by the CBC. In fact, this year, this corporation will cost the Canadian taxpayers 191 million dollars. There was a time, during an elections period I know, when CBC employees made hotel reservations in Montreal, in Quebec and in Trois-Rivières totalling \$48,000 and these rooms were never once occupied. Reservations were made, bills were paid with the taxpayers' money and the rooms were not even occupied. So much for the employees of the CBC. But surely somebody is responsible for such a state of things. It helps to make us realize all the difference between state agencies and private business. If a private company were to be under such management as the public sector there would not be one company left in business today for they would all be bankrupt.

● (5:10 p.m.)

The government is not bankrupt because it could not care less about expenditures, the people of Canada are paying. When funds run out, it gets more money by raising taxes. And that is the way public monies are spent.

I can hardly believe that no one is responsible for such excessive expenditures, for such abuses. I have here the Auditor General's report. Paragraph 72 is enough to convince anyone that there is still much waste. I quote:

72. Indirect compensation to chartered banks.

It is not an expenditure, but it amounts to the same thing and Canadians do not know anything about it. Most hon. members do not either.

[Mr. Caouette.]

And to go on with the quotation:

It continues to be the practice of the government to maintain large balances on deposit with the chartered banks, receiving interest only on balances in excess of an aggregate interest-free amount of \$100 million.

In other words, the government does not earn any interest on \$100 million on deposit in a chartered bank. It starts earning a small interest if the deposit exceeds \$100 million.

Interest amounted to \$20.1 million in 1968-69. The average effective rate was 5.64 per cent.

In proceeding that way, the government is losing large sums of money. If the chartered bank where the government has a savings deposit is entitled to multiply that deposit by 14 under the Bank Act, since any savings account in a chartered bank constitutes a reserve in the Bank of Canada, we can easily imagine the unlimited powers of the banks, while the government, to please bankers, exempts them from paying interests on such a fantastic sum as \$100 million!

Let us see what is happening in another area. According to the estimates of June 1964, the National Arts Centre was to cost \$18,223,000. The estimated final cost reached \$46,426,000, exceeding the original estimate by \$28,203,000.

The accumulated outlay to March 31, 1969 was \$43,779,000 which was provided for by annual appropriations of the Secretary of State.

I would bet anything that the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) was not even aware of it.

Of that amount, \$39,631,000 pertains to the construction of the Centre including the underground garage—a building complex which was to cost \$18 million—and \$3,463,000 to consultants' fees. Those who supervised the work and made sure that plans were followed were paid \$3,463,000 as fees.

Mr. Speaker if this is not an outright gift to political friends I can no longer make head or tail of politics.

An additional amount of \$1,000,227 was spent since the end of the year. This is in addition to full-scale political patronage through which people are granted amounts of the order of \$3,463,000. No wonder some people stick to the system. And if attempts are made to direct their thought to other things, to get them interested in something serious, it is absolutely impossible, because they are totally dependent on the system. It pays them at the expense of the population.