

● (1540)

Another serious problem which was pointed out by the Auditor General recently is that the productivity figure is down to around 65 per cent. We hope this is something on which this government will be working. Increased efficiency and productivity will be a start in reducing some expenditures. This has been brought out on a regular basis.

Over \$1 billion has been spent annually by Liberal governments on outside consultants. We do not believe that is necessary when we have 550,000 civil servants. We have sufficient expertise in the government not to have to resort continually to that number of outside consultants. Of course, some consulting work has to be done from outside, but not to the tune of \$1 billion.

Another area in which we could cut back in expenditures is the costly metric conversion program. Some excellent speeches have been made here recently in which hon. members have pointed out how wasteful and costly the conversion program is and how we could cut back on it.

Also, there are many cases of totally unnecessary Statistics Canada surveys. There are hundreds of them around and we question the need for them. They ask many personal and unnecessary questions. We could cut back on those surveys.

We question the need for some 431 Crown corporations, many of which have outlived their usefulness. There should be a complete review of these Crown corporations. Canadian taxpayers are paying for many that are simply not required.

Another costly area which has been allowed to continue to run out of control is public works. A stop should be put to the rental of unneeded office space across Canada. The former minister of public works, the hon. member for the Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), had started on a program to reduce the unnecessary rental of unneeded office space, but unfortunately he did not have time to complete his program fully. It would have resulted in the saving of millions of dollars.

Duplication is another unnecessary cost that taxpayers have to cover. It occurs at all three levels of government—municipal, provincial and federal. I want to congratulate the former prime minister because the agenda of the meeting which he was going to have around December 15 contained an item concerning the duplication of forms which was to have been discussed with the premiers with the purpose of eliminating much of it within governments.

I should like to give you, Mr. Speaker, an example of what happens in some businesses with government forms. One example is Chevron Canada Limited which has to complete 491 monthly, quarterly and annual reports for the federal government, which are then inspected by 14 federal agencies, 19 provincial agencies, and eight municipal departments. This apparent duplication of government inspection and excessive paperwork must be monitored more closely and reduced. But I doubt that this will happen under the present government. The cost of filling out these forms and processing them costs businesses and governments millions of dollars annually, a cost

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which is, of course, passed on to the taxpayer or the consumer in one form or another.

I will give another example of overlapping and duplication, Mr. Speaker. There is a consortium of seven major oil companies. Their contract was cancelled. It was a promising \$60 million contract for a drilling program off the Labrador coast in 1977, because Ottawa and Newfoundland both seek control over offshore mineral rights. In Quebec public housing projects worth \$150 million were blocked for as long as four years by disagreement between federal and provincial agencies. Residents of some 20 communities were denied cable television for three years while officials in Winnipeg and Ottawa fought over the ownership of a certain type of cable equipment. All this duplication and overlapping goes on endlessly. These are just a few examples of what the government should consider. It has nothing to do with social programs.

Another area that is costing the Canadian taxpayers millions of dollars due to the direct neglect of successive Liberal governments is a program which was introduced by the Diefenbaker government back in 1958. I am referring to the roads to resources program which was to open up the north. In the 1950s it was identified that the oil shortage and the energy crunch was going to come in the early 1980s. Whoever predicted that knew what he was talking about because in this regard we have a very serious problem in this country. This program was laughed at by the Liberals. When they formed a government in 1963, the roads to resources program was dropped and the government started relying on imported oil. Today Canadian taxpayers are paying around \$9 million a day for imported oil. With increased consumption and no proper conservation plans, the cost will increase.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, the enormous costs we are incurring. Any taxpayer who thinks he will have cheap gas and will not have to pay 15, 16 or 18 cents a gallon more is indirectly paying a subsidy which is costing Canadians millions of dollars a day. That will continue under the present government.

Another staggering figure is cost overruns. The former president of the treasury board had done a lot of work on this and had started corrective measures. Last year, cost overruns cost the Canadian taxpayers \$1.062 billion. This matter has been raised repeatedly in the House and we really do not know whether or not the present government has taken any corrective measures because we have received no constructive answers from the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Johnston). There were around 497 projects with cost overruns. So any one who says there is no control is not exaggerating. That is exactly what it is.

I want to explain what the Clark government inherited when it took office last year. On taking office in June of 1979, the Clark government was presented with a federal financial situation far more serious than that acknowledged by the preceding Liberal administration, and worse than expected by the most pessimistic of forecasters. The new government found that the budgetary deficit was out of control, that the accounts of Canada were in disarray, that expenditure control systems on