

Government Orders

He comes out with his reports and we see in this House where they become a great foofaraw for a couple of days. Then it dies down, and it is left to the public accounts committee to do the work for days thereafter. It is a pleasure to do that. We who serve on the public accounts committee have enjoyed it. It is a very broad perspective on government.

Kenneth Dye is a dedicated man. He has done his utmost to serve Canadians and this Parliament well. He is also served well by a very capable staff, people who are in place to do a job for him, to do his research. Also, in his important role to Canadians, he is seen as the defender of the purse.

I said to him the other day that during his term in office he learned the approach of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt used to have his little fireside chats. He would turn on the American nation, get them over to his side, and then Congress would have to vote along with him or the pressure came from the American public. We have known Kenneth Dye to be an outspoken person who had no hesitation to raise issues publicly. When the Canadian people heard him speak, they respected him and brought that to the attention of parliamentarians. This is an office, Mr. Speaker, that reports to Parliament through you. The Auditor General is a servant of Parliament. We thank Ken Dye and his people for the service they have provided to the House, to the Parliament of Canada in general and to the people of Canada.

• (1630)

We wish our new Auditor General every success. It is not an easy job dealing with politicians from time to time, but they all come into it knowing full well what their role is. I hope the new Auditor General will have the support of this House as he takes on his new duties.

There are other things about which I would like to speak, but I am going to stop here because I am sure there are other people who want to comment. Besides that, I am losing my voice, so it may not be by voluntary consent. I want to thank you for your time, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the members of the House for their patience.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Under Standing Order 43, the hon. member did have unlimited time with no questions or comments.

We will now proceed to the next speaker who will have 20 minutes plus 10 minutes of questions and comments.

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speakers, I have first to congratulate my predecessor on a marathon session which has covered a great deal of ground. As usual he has made some very important points reflecting his experience in the public accounts committee.

We have in front of us a very large amount of money which this government is asking this Parliament to grant it. This bill, if it passes the House, will authorize the government of this country to borrow as much as \$26.4 billion.

That is such a large amount of money that it is almost inconceivable to the average person in this country. It is not the kind of thing which is easy to think about. If we think of it in terms of this country of 26 million, each of us is permitting the government to borrow \$1,000 on our behalf. Each and every person across this country is giving authorization to this government to borrow \$1,000.

We have to ask the question: Is this a government which has earned the right to do that kind of massive borrowing on behalf of the people of Canada? Since it came before Parliament and last asked for authority to borrow from the people of Canada, does its record in the past year show a sensitivity to the concerns of the people of Canada? Does its record show that it has financially organized its affairs well? Does its record show that its economic leadership in particular gives reason for confidence to those 26 million Canadians?

Mrs. McDougall: Absolutely.

Mr. Langdon: The minister says: "Absolutely". I have to say absolutely not.

I am sure when the minister has had a chance to work her way through the large amounts of correspondence with which she has to deal and looks at some of the fresh statistics which have emerged today, she will realize how devastating they are with respect to this government's record. I am sure that she cannot be pleased to see that the number of bankruptcies in this country are up by 68