

totally lacking. It does nothing to allow Parliament the authority to hold a Crown corporation accountable.

The accountability of a Crown corporation should include all public money that it spends and not only that which was approved by Parliament. There should also be accountability when a Crown corporation spends money for which Parliament may become responsible.

In the case of Canadair, we know that a lot of money was spent and the corporation went into severe debt. Although this happened through the back door, Parliament became responsible for that money. Canadair was given letters of comfort and had the authority to borrow money without parliamentary approval. This circumstance has not been dealt with in this Bill and therefore has not addressed accountability in that sense.

As the previous speaker indicated, we also know that the Government has suddenly become very concerned about this Bill because it is operating a full-fledged holding company illegally. CDIC is a corporation that has been operating illegally for almost a year. That holding company gives control and responsibility for a number of Crown corporations to one person or group.

One would think that, in an effort to introduce an accountability Bill in the House of Commons the Government would use the best possible model in its new holding company to show that it has the political will to control and be accountable for these corporations. Instead, the Senator from the other place comes before us and asks for the money to pay off the debts of Canadair and to be entrusted to use the money well. That is not accountability. That requires trust, which this Government has not built up in this House or in the country. I do not think that by its example this Government has developed the kind of confidence that we as Members of the House of Commons, as representatives of the people of Canada, can use in order to allow this Bill to go through without obstruction.

• (1540)

Before this Bill is passed, Mr. Speaker, all these accountability factors should be looked at very thoroughly. When the Auditor General said he thought the Parliament of Canada should be accountable for all taxpayers' money, he could have extended that, and possibly he did, beyond the money given to Crown corporations. Yesterday in this House the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) brought up a further area of accountability which I think needs to be looked at as well. We talk about accountability, so what about the money given to large corporations by the Government as tax breaks? Maybe we should look at accountability for that money.

Perhaps the Minister, who is present today, should add to his area of concern beyond the accountability of Crown corporations. We give out a lot of money in the form of grants to large corporations. How are they accountable? Why do we not require them to be accountable for the money in the same way we require accountability from our Crown corporations? I think we need a much more solid Act which will do what it is supposed to do rather than just touch the fringes. We need to

extend accountability to every cent of taxpayers' money which is spent in any way.

I know that accountability, even within government departments, needs some looking at. What we really need to do is establish the type of economic planning which uses the money we take from the taxpayer and uses it well, not only in Crown corporations but in departments and in the assistance we give to large corporations. That is the kind of accountability we need to look at, Mr. Speaker. I agree we should take a lot more time to establish government accountability, and forcing this Bill through by closure is not the way we are going to do it.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have a chance to say a few words this afternoon on this motion under Standing Order 82 finally to draw to a close the debate on Bill C-24 which has been before the House for many weeks now. When we think that the British House of Commons passed in two days the legislation allowing the U.K. to join the European Common Market, and the fact that we spent six days on this Bill at second reading when the vast majority of the work on the Bill is really going to have to be done in committee, it just seems ridiculous that we go on day after day debating a Bill where all the major topics have been covered. I think 21.5 hours have been spent on this Bill and 85 Members have spoken; five from this side, 14 from the NDP and 66 from the Official Opposition. It just seems unbelievable that anything new or constructive can be put forward on this Bill at this stage. Therefore, it seems wise to move on to the completion of second reading, allowing one more day for consideration and debate, ultimately bringing the debate to a close and making a decision.

Clearly this is the place for debate. That is what it is all about. But after a reasonable period of time, surely there is need for a decision to be made. I thought we would have had a vote on Monday afternoon, but when you get a six-month hoist motion introduced after some 50 or 60 Members have spoken, it is clear that the Opposition do not want to debate the Bill, they want to obstruct it and block it. They want to prevent its passage and they will use any technique whatsoever to do that.

It is interesting to look back in *Hansard* for December 9, 1982, where we see that the then Leader of the Opposition, the Right Hon. Member for Yellowhead (Mr. Clark), brought in a motion urging the House to get on with this Bill. The motion reads:

That this House condemns the Government for its deliberate proliferation of Crown corporations accountable to the Government rather than Parliament and the taxpayers who, in the words of the Auditor General, "have every right to consider themselves the principal shareholders of these corporations", and instructs the Government to immediately introduce a Bill substantially the same as Bill C-27 in the 31st Parliament so as to make such corporations properly accountable to the people.

This is what we have done, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, this Bill is much stronger in many respects than Bill C-27. Now, almost a year and a half after this motion was put before the House, what do we see? Continual verbiage on this Bill with no decision being made.