

Supply

[Translation]

What is his riding? Does he have one? He has forgotten the name of his riding because all his constituents have forgotten his name. That is why!

Mr. Rossi: Try your stuff in Bourassa and they will cream you!

Mr. Clark: So his riding is Bourassa!

[English]

An Hon. Member: It is Bourassa.

Mr. Nielsen: Order.

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for letting myself be diverted by the gentleman from Bourassa (Mr. Rossi), but I understand the frustration he feels as a Member of the Liberal Party caucus. He has no place else where he can speak, so he has to shout from his seat here in the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, let me leave aside the Hon. Member for Bourassa and come back to serious matters. The Reports of the Auditor General of Canada always do this country a great service, but perhaps no Report has been more important for the country than this last one, not just because of its contents but because it serves to dramatize the fact that there is action within Canada that we can take—action to stop waste, action to create jobs and action to restore confidence—if only the Government has the will to act.

If the Auditor General's Report is new, fresh on the Table, then the problem is not new; nor is the opportunity to solve that problem. The Government itself has a Bill dealing with Crown Corporations. In essence, it gives control to the Government, not to Parliament. My colleague, the Hon. Member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Beatty), introduced a very different kind of Bill when he was the Minister responsible, different because it gave control to Parliament and thus to the people which Parliament represents. He will speak in more detail of the dangers that are involved, of the actual situation and of the changes that we will make to meet those dangers.

Because we trust Parliament and we believe that a Parliament with real powers can become trusted again by the people, that will be another step forward toward the co-operation and the confidence upon which our future is founded. That kind of change is an abiding interest. But our urgent interest today is in having this institution act to help Canadians whose lives are quite literally coming apart. We in this Parliament are the only ones who can help. It is no help to those people to send out propaganda on the six and five program. It is no help for the Minister of Finance to sympathize and then go on to say that things are going to get worse. It is certainly no help to take money from pensioners. But there are things that we can do. I have suggested some of them today. Others in this debate will suggest others. The Auditor General has shown one way to

make a major change that will stop waste and build confidence.

We are here to act, sir. We have to act. For God's sake, let us do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Doug Anguish (The Battlefords-Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to follow the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) in this very important debate concerning the accountability of Crown corporations. It is certainly a bit disheartening for me to see the jaws of some of the Members of the Liberal Party flapping on the other side at a time in our history when they should be listening to some of the constructive criticism that is being made of the lack of accountability by Crown corporations.

Before getting into the delivery of my remarks this afternoon, I would like to compliment the Hon. Members for Capilano (Mr. Huntington) and the Hon. Member for Rosemont (Mr. Lachance) for the work they did over the summer preparing the paper on parliamentary accountability, which they submitted to the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure. Some of the things that have been reflected in the recommendations have been adopted by this Parliament and will come into force on December 22, 1982.

In this document entitled "Accountability: Closing the Loop," the Hon. Members for Capilano and Rosemont point out:

The Government must seek approval from Parliament for its spending program, and it should account to Parliament for its spending performance.

The Government should account to Parliament for any tax dollars that are spent. Members of Parliament must look at fulfilling their responsibilities in several areas. They must then examine the proposal for expenditure and when doing so not only establish the results to be expected but examine the effectiveness of past expenditures against results achieved in the program and the envelope sectors.

● (1550)

Finally, I think they must hold the Government accountable for accomplishing what was intended to have been accomplished with the complete ability to point out areas of waste and inefficiency. The Government has moved a long way, through the office of the Comptroller-General, to assist in some of those areas in which Members of Parliament and Parliament itself should be much more involved. I am talking about the revised form of the Estimates which are presently coming about and will be completed within the next couple of years. While this is not soon enough, it is a step in the right direction.

These revised Estimates concern three main areas. When I first came to the House, all that Members had available to them when the Estimates were tabled was the Blue Book, which was a comprehensive document that lacked the information which Members of Parliament needed in order to do their