

*Waste and Mismanagement*

One of our first attempts with a responsible motion was on February 2, 1978, when we called for the formation of a special committee to be struck before February 28, 1978, to consider the enactment of sunset laws to provide for the termination of programs or agencies which had outlived their usefulness. This was a motion presented by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark). Of course, it was talked out by members of the NDP and Liberals who are not simply interested in a proper examination of government departments and their expenditures—it is a matter of philosophy—and also the adoption of new, flexible budget planning techniques to discourage unnecessary growth of department budgets. Of course, if anybody wants to find out whether we have any control of things he just has to read the Auditor General's comments, but I will get to that in a few minutes.

This situation of parliament no longer having any control of expenditures came about in 1968 when one of the first acts of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was to change parliamentary rules so that there was no proper examination of expenditures. I will get to his comments about that in a few minutes.

The hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Anderson), who has just spoken, said that we have a proper examination of the budget and the expenditures of these departments. What a ridiculous lot of nonsense that is. We do not have any control at all. There has only been an amount of \$19,000 removed from budgets since 1969 out of the hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars that have been spent. There is no proper review in depth when we consider the miscellaneous increases to which the Auditor General has referred, without even considering the Auditor General's comments. He has said that he cannot even find out where the money is going.

We have heard a lot of reference to restraint, but that is not really the right word in many cases. We should be referring to the elimination of duplication, mismanagement and waste. I should just like to refer to a few of the costly luxuries and excesses of this government. Let me give these examples. A consortium of seven major oil companies cancelled a promising \$60 million drilling program off the coast of Labrador in 1977 because Ottawa and Newfoundland were both seeking control over offshore minerals.

In Quebec, public housing projects worth \$150 million were blocked for as long as four years because of disagreements between federal and provincial agencies.

The residents of some 20 communities in southern Manitoba were denied cable television for three years while officials in Winnipeg and Ottawa fought over the ownership of a certain type of cable equipment.

● (1720)

In 1975, the tax burden on the Brenda copper mine in British Columbia was more than double the rate paid by competing mines in the United States as federal and provincial attempts were made to solve this problem. There has never been any attempt by this government to eliminate a lot of this duplication.

A moment ago an hon. member in the NDP was exhorting me to tell the truth. The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) referred to a great deal of figures earlier this afternoon with regard to provincial debt. He also referred to the Alberta debt, and the fact that the municipal debts and a great many other debts in that province have recently been reduced. The latest figures are not out for the provincial debt of Alberta. Therefore, there is no way that a member can quote figures in this House on the debt of Alberta. If anyone wants to talk about the debts of provinces, they should present the whole picture including the ways in which provinces transfer their debts. For example, some provinces transfer their debts to Crown corporations. There is no way that one should quote debt figures unless one goes into total detail.

Another example of waste by this Liberal government is the \$4 million spent on the Task Force on Canadian Unity. There was no need for the appointment of this body at all. Every time this government feels that there is a crisis, they give a job to Jean-Luc Pepin. The members of this House and the Senate are elected and appointed to deal with the problems of this country. My leader took a responsible position with regard to this task force and proposed the appointment of a joint committee of the House of Commons and the Senate to solve the problem. We do not need Pepin or somebody else to travel across the country at a cost of \$4 million. Last year a joint committee sat through part of the summer and into the fall to deal with Bill C-60, the constitutional bill. Another such committee could have dealt with this matter. There might have been some travelling expenses, but I am sure that we could have saved from \$3 million to \$3.5 million.

When the government is responsible and controls its expenses, it shows up on the bottom line in the rate of inflation. Since the end of World War II, there have been only four governments which have had sound financial policies and controlled their expenditures. During these governments, there was nobody dying on the streets or starving to death because there was sound financial policy. I will refer to three, the Adenauer administration of Germany, the Eisenhower administration and the Diefenbaker administration. They had the best record of any governments since World War II right up to the period between 1957 and 1963. While the other two countries had an inflation rate hovering around 2 per cent, the inflation rate of the Diefenbaker government was between 1.2 per cent and 1.6 per cent. That is a very enviable record and I hope that we can return to controlling inflation again with a responsible government in this country.

With this government it is either total incompetence or deliberate incompetence. When one studies the statements made by the Prime Minister over the years with regard to—

**Mr. Huntington:** It is deliberate.

**Mr. McKenzie:** The hon. member says that it is deliberate. I would like to read some of the statements made by the Prime Minister because they are certainly very suspicious. He has stated: