

*Restraint of Government Expenditures*

We in western Canada have learned to know the Minister of Transport and we do not trust him. I say to him that if there is any further erosion of the Crowsnest rates, he will be in mighty trouble. I do not believe this is the first step in his demise. He took it himself when he stepped into the plane, but this is another step. I repeat to the minister very clearly that in no way will western, central, and eastern Canadians accept his continual tampering with freight rates without any compensatory action, and they will not accept his attitude that he is always right even though the world is against him. That is the attitude which he is continually portraying. Everybody is out of step except our Otto.

Who speaks on the question of the repeal? Is it the Minister of Agriculture who has said in committee, and it is on the record, in the way that only he can say it, that the bill is worthless, or is it the Minister of Transport who is trying to convince the Canadian people that the government is saving the taxpayers' money? What kind of flim-flam shell game is this? I agree that this is a significant sum, but it pales in comparison with the \$740,000 for a public aircraft that the minister has used. If the minister is travelling specifically on government business and he cannot fit into commercial airline schedules, then government planes are there for the use of ministers, but what did the minister use that plane for? I guess that must have been one of the highest flying cocktail parties in Canada's history. Also he went to the Grey Cup game to represent the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde), who at that time had the responsibility for fitness and amateur sport. I find it surprising that he went to a professional game in that capacity. But be that as it may, I wonder why the Minister of Transport had to fly there when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was already there representing the government.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** He was there to hold the flower.

● (2140)

**Mr. Epp:** We are now talking about restraint. The minister has flown to exotic places! He keeps on mentioning Grande Prairie. There is nothing wrong with Grande Prairie. In our modern age when people travel long distances by jet, a condition called jet lag develops. We do not have jet lag with this minister. We have jet Lang, but not jet lag.

**Mr. Lang:** You should try that one back home.

**Mr. Epp:** The minister says I should try that one back home. Well, we have, and we find that our constituents agree with us. They think it is unconscionable that the minister has spent the money he has.

**Mr. Parent:** What about when you flew back with him?

**Mr. Epp:** I did not fly back with him.

**Mr. Parent:** You have never flown back?

[Mr. Epp.]

**Mr. Epp:** Never. I was not even invited, and after I am finished with my speech hon. members will see why.

**Mr. MacFarlane:** That's what's wrong; he didn't invite you.

**Mr. Epp:** We will get to that in a minute. The point I am making—and obviously it has struck a responsive note opposite—is that Canadians will follow leadership but not the kind of leadership that the high-flying minister has shown.

Let us go on to another program, the Company of Young Canadians. This bill would end the existence of the CYC but in fact it ceased to exist on April 1, 1976. The CYC programs received much criticism, and many of the programs of the CYC could be described as social animation. Frankly I believe that the CYC should never have been started, and when it was abolished and given a decent burial, that was one of the best things which ever happened to it.

It is interesting that the last time the representatives of the CYC appeared before our committee, we asked them specifically about their projects, and they were not quite sure about the projects they had, but they said they would give us a list in due time. Approximately ten days ago, even though the CYC ceased to exist on April 1, 1976, those representatives finally came in with their annual report. But for what year? 1974. How can the government continue to fund groups, literally giving them carte blanche, and then go back to the Canadian people and say that it has a firm hand on the till and that it has control of its spending? The government obviously does not have that control. The lesson of the CYC is one all of us should keep in mind, and it is this: it was much easier to establish the CYC with its minimal cost benefit for the communities in which it served than to give it a decent burial, because once programs have been established by the government—

**An hon. Member:** It supported education.

**Mr. Epp:** If the hon. member is capable or rising and making a speech, I would be pleased to give him the floor. He probably needs the exercise.

The point is that programs initiated by the government are not easily discontinued, because people get locked into programs, and they become self-perpetuating. It is very difficult, from a political point of view, to end a program once it is established, and it behooves this government and every political party and every provincial government not to accept at face value every program which might look good on the surface, and to institute it, only to find out that over the years those programs cannot be ended.

**Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Your constituents bought that idea.

**Mr. Epp:** No, they did not. They elected me and defeated the former Liberal member.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!