

The Economy

ments. Senior appointments are made, salaries and expenses are set and tenure of office is determined—all by the governor in council.

I feel that that process has become a way of life for this government. There is a proliferation of boards, commissions and tribunals, staffed mainly by political hacks rewarded for past political favours. The power of the boards, commissions and tribunals originates with the governor in council. It flows from the cabinet and back to the cabinet. The existence of a board is at the pleasure of the governor in council. Its funding and appointments are at the pleasure of the governor in council.

There must be a relationship between the number of consultants employed by the government and lack of experience on boards and commissions. It seems that if you have a problem or a tough decision or if you are in conflict with career public servants over a matter you are considering, the solution is to put the matter out to a consultant for study.

The citizens of Canada through their elected representatives have lost control of the spending of this government, as the Auditor General said in several of his reports; citizens increasingly find themselves controlled by the government. In its drive to legislate a controlled society and remove the uncertainty from life this government has fettered the average Canadian with rules, regulations and compulsory programs to such a degree that his individual freedom has been substantially reduced and is under perpetual threat. An example of the heavy hand of regulations is the current undertaking to compile existing regulations. In raw form these regulations cover over 12,000 sheets of computer printout, and when printed they will consist of 15 volumes of 800 pages each. In other words, these regulations are considerably more weighty than the consolidated Statutes of Canada. I think it is a fair comment that the existing regulations are estimated to cost the people of Canada about \$6 billion annually.

● (1742)

I believe the fact that we have spent 40 of the last 52 years under one political party has led to entrenchment of a level of bureaucratic regulation that is moving us away from the rule of law and deeper into administrative law.

Through the process I have described where parliament passes legislation that has regulations attached to it by the bureaucracy through the governor in council upon proclamation, we place in operation regulations that have the force of statutes designed by nameless, faceless bureaucrats who are not elected and who answer only to the governor in council. They are not responsible to the people or to parliament through this imperfect process we knowingly deal with every day. We knowingly pass unconstitutional law and attach to that law equally unconstitutional regulations. It is only when some citizen has sufficient financial resources to hire legal counsel to challenge such law that we change the regulations.

But aside from the legislative approach to regulations, I am concerned about the human side. I am concerned when business people tell me that because of the heavy hand of regulations they are not going to expand their factory. Many people

have made representations to me and expressed fear of reprisals from bureaucrats in the Departments of Finance, Industry, Trade and Commerce, Consumer and Corporate Affairs and National Revenue if they rock the boat or make too much noise about certain regulations that are rumoured to go in place or are in place. They fear an appearance before a board or commission. A corporation which appeared before one of our standing committees last year told us that each appearance before a particular board of this government cost them \$1 million. They claimed that the fastest growing department of their business was the legal department and that government regulations cost the corporation \$21 million per year.

I have also noticed the timid approach some national associations take to proposed legislation. The views they express privately differ vastly, in many instances, from those expressed in a brief. Why is this? When you question them closely they seem to fear the heavy hand of government which may change taxation or tariffs or put in place some new reporting procedure that will cause difficulties and be an added burden for their members, so they modify their remarks.

The process of deregulation is as complicated as the process of putting regulations in place in the first instance. It must be an ongoing function and the Parliament of Canada must be involved.

As a start, let me suggest that, starting now, all legislation put to this parliament should have the regulations attached at the time the bill is given first reading. The regulations should be debated with the bill. At committee the regulations should be dealt with along with the legislation itself. When we pass the legislation, we pass the regulations at the same time.

There should be established immediately a committee of the House of Commons similar to the public accounts committee to look into and recommend changes in regulations already in place. I know that a great deal of work has been done in this area but I think if we had a committee of that type we would begin to grapple with the regulations we have now. This committee should have a staff of legal, economic and accounting advisers. The committee should report on the economic impact of regulations on our society and on the economy and recommend changes. It should be a permanent committee that reports to the House of Commons and the government should be required to act on the recommendations put before the House within a specified number of days.

I want to deal now, Mr. Speaker, with some examples of regulations that I have encountered. All western governments recognize that governments have grown too large and that in many instances regulations are inhibiting economic activity. In my business experience, both with companies I have been involved with personally and those that I have endeavoured to assist, I have run up against regulations that are just deplorable. It is a difficult thing for a businessman struggling with our economy to have an employee of Statistics Canada, for example, telephone him and demand that a certain form be completed or a fine of \$250 per day will be levied if this is not done forthwith.