

Refitting of HMCS "Bonaventure"

their main goal. In this interview the President of the Treasury Board referred to the Auditor General. Although the minister thinks the Auditor General is a great fellow, he thinks he would be a lot better if he wrote with invisible ink in an invisible pen. That is really what the minister wants. The minister thinks if the Auditor General used invisible ink in his invisible pen he would have the kind of report that is required. In this interview he said to Mr. Lynch:

I wonder myself whether the Auditor General should cast himself in this role, or whether we should look for really another kind of person to be Auditor General—

I know the kind of person the President of the Treasury Board would like as Auditor General. There used to be a radio program called "The Shadow Knows". That is the fellow he wants to be Auditor General.

An hon. Member: The Green Hornet.

Mr. Coates: No, not the Green Hornet. He wants "The Shadow" and he wants him with an invisible pen with invisible ink so that no one in this country can find out about the misadventure of the *Bonaventure*. I wish to refer to an editorial which appeared in the *Cape Breton Post*. This refers to another stage in the career of the President of the Treasury Board. I quote:

One example is the suggestion by Hon. C. M. Drury, Minister of Industry, in a Montreal speech that the government should print its own newspaper and insert its own programs into the CBC. This sounds incredible, coming from a man of Mr. Drury's presumed intelligence.

That, Mr. Speaker, would be the fantasy of all fantasies. I would love to see the programs that the President of the Treasury Board would prepare for the CBC. Alec Guinness starred in a tremendous movie entitled "Tight Little Island". I think the minister would keep repeating that movie on the CBC so no one would ever find out about the *Bonaventure*. The movie was about a ship that sank with a cargo of scotch. The men of the island went out in rowboats to get the scotch from the ship. They had quite a party.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Never on a Sunday!

Mr. Coates: I do not know whether there was any scotch aboard the *Bonaventure*, but a lot of people had a mighty big party at the expense of the taxpayers.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Coates.]

Mr. Coates: I would like to say more, Mr. Speaker, but one of the members of the NDP has been trying to get the floor. I will let him take over.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the offer of the hon. member. I appreciate it more because it was not offered by the previous speaker.

This is really a sad state of affairs. After meeting for a number of months the committee prepared a very detailed report on a very large expenditure. It is sad that opposition members have to raise this subject on their day rather than having the committee report presented in the ordinary way. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) defended this action. He would have had this same opportunity had he allowed the committee report to be presented in the normal fashion. All opposition members are concerned about our inability to supervise the estimates and expenditures of this House. Some hon. members will remember the days of the old type of estimates when we could understand exactly what was happening. I must admit this was not true when I came to this House; it was more complicated then. The new system of estimates is even more confusing. One of our responsibilities in an economic sense is to scrutinize all expenditures. After a great deal of time and effort the committee unanimously presented a report. The government covered up that report.

I was not impressed by the speech of the President of the Privy Council because I am aware that he was reading someone else's document. He was not giving his own point of view or that of the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux). I was shocked at the speech of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury). This man has had it both ways. He was a senior civil servant. I am sure he remembers the Currie report. It may be true that somebody took the blame for him at that time. I do not know whether he had the responsibility or whether it was the responsibility of someone under him. I am sure he was able to transmit to those responsible the difficulty that developed at that time. I am sure he did something about it.

Although this is a democratic process, I do not entirely agree that the minister has to take the responsibility. This only works when the minister is willing to do something to those responsible for the neglect that occurs. It is all right for the minister to stand in this House and say, "I take full responsibility". There was an expenditure of \$17 million on