

Restraint of Government Expenditures

[Text]

COPIES OF REPORTS OR EVENTS WITH RESPECT TO LEG HOLD TRAPS

Motion No. 23—**Mr. Whiteway:**

That an Order of the House do issue for copies of any task force reports, reviews or studies with respect to the use of leg hold traps.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Stand.

Motion stands.

[Text]

COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO DECENTRALIZATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Motion No. 35—**Mr. Marshall:**

That an Order of the House do issue for copies of all minutes of meetings, correspondence and telegrams having to do with decentralizing the Department of Veterans Affairs to any province.

[English]

Mr. S. Victor Railton (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the documents requested are internal documents of a confidential nature and cannot be produced. I would therefore ask the hon. member to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Speaker: Transferred for debate.

Shall the remaining notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Stevens: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I should like to give notice that tomorrow it is our intention to raise a question of privilege centred on the question of parliamentary secretaries answering on behalf of acting ministers or ministers in this House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT ACT

AMENDMENT TO REMOVE CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS RESPECTING TRAINING ALLOWANCE RATES

The House resumed, from Tuesday, November 23, consideration of the motion of Mr. Andras that Bill C-19, to amend or repeal certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates.

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, to continue with my remarks of last evening on Bill C-19, we

[Mr. Speaker.]

have since last evening had an opportunity to study the answers to the questions directed to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras) yesterday with regard to the latest report of the Auditor General and the government's proposal to establish a royal commission to examine the uncontrolled expenditures in the country today.

I note that the President of the Treasury Board in answer to one question said that there is no doubt that the Auditor General has recommended the establishment of the office of a comptroller general. He said:

We are not negating this; we say that it has a certain appeal and attraction, but that the question begins to bear on other important questions to do with the whole process of parliament and accountability.

I think it is most unfortunate that this recommendation is not accepted because in this way some action could be taken in respect of the uncontrolled expenditures and the financial fiasco we have in this country today. As was pointed out yesterday, the appointment of this royal commission is nothing but a stalling tactic. It will take years before this commission will come back with any recommendations. Sufficient recommendations have been made by the Auditor General in this recent report and in the past number of years. Practically none of these recommendations have been implemented by the government.

Before I continue my remarks I should like to refer to a speech made in Toronto by the former minister of finance, Mr. John Turner. This speech was made on November 20. Mr. Turner criticized the federal government's economic policies and called for an immediate end to wage and price controls. If this is not a case of the kettle calling the pot black I do not know what it is. Here we have a former finance minister who has not taken much responsibility for the financial mess we have in this country today, although while he was minister over a number of years he introduced some of the most disastrous budgets this country has seen. When he criticizes the government today he is actually criticizing himself.

I should also like to refer to a study that was completed just last year by the Independent Review Committee. This is a detailed study of the office of the Auditor General. The report contains 162 pages of recommendations to improve the Department of the Auditor General. It is full of recommendations on how to improve accounting systems in the federal government. This is another reason why we do not need this royal commission.

I should like to refer to the terms of reference in respect of the Independent Review Committee. They state:

The Review Committee shall inquire into and report upon what should be the responsibilities, relationships with government departments and agencies, and reporting procedures of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada and what should be the statutory and other requirements to ensure that he can meet such responsibilities with the necessary degree of independence. The inquiry is to include a review of:

—the responsibilities of the Office in relation to current conditions and requirements, taking into account the manner in which comparable functions are discharged in other countries having similar governmental institutions;