

tions asked about the reliability, the performance, and indeed the management of Statistics Canada, and I am sure there will be more questions in this respect. It is interesting to realize that the hiring of contractual personnel rather than relying on full time services provided by regular employees has been a contributing factor to unnecessary expenditures there and a circumvention of the Treasury Board rules. However, I will possibly be dealing with this in question periods in days to come, or perhaps in committee.

There are many examples of government bungling and unnecessary expenditures. We know that capital expenditures of an unnecessary type are all too common. The hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington) has been very conscientious in pointing out the inappropriateness of some of the planning which led to the construction of Les Terrasses de la Chaudière in Hull, which at the present time would appear to be not only an unnecessary edifice but also one which will be extremely costly, involving hundreds of millions of dollars of projected expenditure of taxpayers' money over the next 30 to 35 years.

There were a great many illustrations of poor planning and lack of foresight involved in the construction of the \$600 million plus Mirabel airport and, without labouring this to death, I think it would be interesting by way of illustration just to put on the record a couple of other things which have happened over at Mirabel. When the cold weather set in it was the plan of the Department of Transport to de-ice the runway once a day. It was anticipated that the traffic would be sufficient to keep the ice down and make only one de-icing necessary. The department was wrong again. As we all know, traffic has not been up to projections, and some of the pilots landing planes wondered whether they were on the runway or on a skating rink. Because of the poor planning of the government we will have to absorb the burden of de-icing the runway more than once a day or risk safety standard violations. That is another expensive and unnecessary piece of poor planning.

When the system for de-icing planes was designed, there was supposed to be a tank set up to collect the toxic material used to clean the planes in order to re-use it. Not only is this toxic material not being re-used, but instead it is being put into the Montreal sewage system and has environmentalists very concerned. That is another example of needless expense.

To shed light on the government's business activities, I will give one more example with regard to Mirabel. Amid much fanfare the government introduced passenger transit vehicles to Mirabel which are supposed to take passengers from the waiting rooms to airplanes. With its usual foresight the government had its vehicles tested in Los Angeles which, as everyone knows, is not notorious for its snow and cold winters. After these vehicles received the sunny California brand of approval and were checked out, they were brought to Mirabel where they proceeded to freeze up and malfunction, again at considerable expense.

It becomes pretty obvious that this government, and indeed all members of this parliament must re-examine their spending habits. If we continue to have a cavalier disregard for the way taxpayers' money is spent, if we are prepared to say one thing

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and do another, if we are prepared to talk restraint and by our actions do the opposite, we will never succeed in getting the people of this country to take us as parliamentarians in general, and the government in particular, very seriously.

● (2030)

In the days ahead when Bill C-19 is being debated and when the Auditor General's report is being discussed, I would urge the government for once to take very seriously the suggestions made for meaningful restraint. In particular I would urge the government not to treat the suggestions of the Auditor General from the point of view indicated by the Prime Minister this afternoon as those of an accountant, or someone only concerned with the business aspect of running parliament. It should keep in mind that the Auditor General is not just a glorified accountant and is more than a bookkeeper; he is a very, very important officer of this House.

Until the rules are changed and parliament is given more control over its own spending and that of the country—which was the *raison d'être* for the creation of parliament in the first place—the Auditor General is probably the only independent safeguard the people have to make certain the financial direction of the country does not degenerate into the kind of chaos he feared was imminent. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that unless some of his suggestions are taken seriously, his worst fears may soon be realized.

Mr. Peter P. Masniuk (Portage): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-19 known as the government's Expenditures Restraint Act. After the summer recess I expected to return to parliament and see a refreshed government aggressively throw itself into the job of governing this country. I thought that at the very least in this House we would see a reinvigorated Liberal party and government with a little bit of rekindled enthusiasm and rededication among the party faithful. After the Prime Minister's (Mr. Trudeau) public soul-searching during the summer and the party caucus's much publicised consciousness-raising sessions at Meach Lake and other places this is the least I expected to find, but I was disappointed and even that modest expectation was not realized.

The Speech from the Throne was a pedestrian exercise which could not excite even the most dedicated Liberals in this House. Contrary to the usual practice it did not contain a list of proposed government legislation. After about six weeks of this new session and a similar number of bills tabled by the government, it is now clear why this was not done. None of the bills is new or original, and some have actually been promised for years. I suppose we should be glad that they are at least seeing the light of day. Government members are having as much difficulty being enthusiastic about them as they were about the Speech from the Throne.

Bill C-19 certainly has not broken this pattern, Mr. Speaker. It is a very negative bill. It is also a defiant bill—not positively defiant but rather negatively defiant. It is on the defensive. This is amusing because during this new session I have heard very often from members opposite the retort, "Tell us what