

*Refitting of HMCS "Bonaventure"*

process of evaluating program effectiveness and administrative efficiency in government. What is required, and what has been lacking, is a continuing program of evaluation. This we have started to do in an orderly way. We have begun, as I have said, the evaluation of administrative efficiency generally and we have adopted new approaches to the evaluation of administrative and personnel management.

In addition, we have begun systematically to review in a fundamental way some major areas of policy. Certain of the major policy reviews are now in the public domain, such as the reviews of defence policy, of external policy and of income tax policy. Others, such as income security, are still under internal analysis. But in addition to all these major reviews we are beginning in an embryonic way systematically to examine the effectiveness of individual programs. We are not sure how successful we will be. So far we are sure only that new techniques are required and that old habits of thinking will have to be re-examined. But I am confident that only in this way will governments be forced to review the costliest element of public administration, the programs themselves.

• (5:50 p.m.)

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this will give hon. members an overview of the measures we have adopted for improving effectiveness and efficiency in the government of Canada. I am sure that to most it will have seemed a technical, indeed a less than absorbing review. But if you want to debate efficiency in public administration, you have to be prepared to get right down to the measures which are required to achieve it.

It is, of course, much more spectacular to make general and unsupported charges. One can wax eloquent and use extravagant prose in a case of this kind. But the job of this House, I suggest, is like the job of this government: to examine seriously, carefully and rigorously the operations of departments to ensure that they are performing their duties effectively and efficiently. It is not spectacular work. It rarely makes headlines. But it lies at the heart of protecting the taxpayers, as the hon. member who proposed this motion put it, "from waste, extravagance and other abuses in the spending of government money."

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, would the minister permit a question? I ask the minister if he is going to leave these public servants, the two

[Mr. Drury.]

deputy ministers and the other senior civil servants, undefended and blackened across the country in the eyes of the public.

Mr. Drury: The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is an emphatic no. As I mentioned at the outset of my remarks, this task will be done by the ministers having administrative responsibility for the departments in which these officials are performing their duties.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, before the hon. gentleman leaves the chamber for his dinner I must say that never before have I seen a situation where a man—I suppose one might as well be frank—who has one way or another been seriously charged by events, has stood up in the House of Commons to address himself to it and has dismissed it as lightly as we witnessed within the last 15 or 20 minutes. As a matter of fact, I am rather stunned—even appalled—that the minister would treat so lightly the overhaul and repair of the *Bonaventure* and still think that the House and the people of the country are going to accept his walking away from it that easily. In connection with that, and because of the minister's remarks, before I finish my intention in this debate I am going to move an amendment to the motion that is now before the House and I hope we will debate its merits before the day is over.

The history of this matter is pretty clear. It has been dealt with by the mover of the motion, the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster (Mr. Bell). My entry into the debate is occasioned by a very real concern for the situation that has developed, in which the inference is quite clear from the question just asked of the minister with respect to individuals whom the committee in the performance of its duties saw fit to name. The minister cannot blithely walk away with a lecture to this House on administration. He cannot walk away from his responsibilities in this matter. Indeed, had it been my responsibility, the motion would have been much stronger and I have no hesitation in advising the minister that my contribution to the debate will be strong.

The motion seems to have struck the minister in such a way that he felt a simple lecture to the House on the discharge of responsibility would meet the occasion. Again, so that the remarks I intend to direct to this matter will be clearly understood, I say at the outset that I welcome the non-partisan way in which the committee approached the overhaul of the