

Company of Young Canadians Act

corrected it and must have clearly illustrated this blind tunnel vision. On September 29, the minister issued a statement when he appointed five members of the first permanent council of the CYC. I am sure he knows what I am going to read. After setting out the names of the appointees as Lloyd Axworthy, Jeannette Corbiere, Michael Kirby, Shawn Sullivan and one other, the report of the minister's statement read:

"The formative period of the Company is over," said Mr. Pelletier... "These appointments are proof of the government's confidence in it."

That is a pathetic statement to confront the minister with today in view of the fact that, according to the press, three of the people he appointed have written him to say that the government should take over the whole CYC council, and that there should not be just a comptroller appointed. What is the minister's reaction to that suggestion from three of his appointees? It is a sad commentary on his judgment that he could say on September 29 that the formative period of the company was over.

We have only to look to one other person to see the reality of the situation that exists. To support the argument that we should not have a patchwork quilt approach, or a stop-gap procedure to amend policies that should have received attention two or three years ago when this matter first bubbled and simmered, we have only to look to a man who is a friend of many hon. members opposite, a great Canadian, Mr. Duncan Edmonds. He has as much faith in the concept of a social agency working through young people as anyone else, including the minister or any members on this side of the House.

Mr. Edmonds, who in the past was quite active in politics and who has not been a friend of my party, said at a press conference in Ottawa, as reported by John Walker in the *Ottawa Citizen* of December 6:

—the proper thing to do is what the Tories suggest: Stop it (the CYC), use the lessons learned and find other ways and means of harnessing youthful energies for social action.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Nowlan: It so happened that Mr. Edmonds and I issued statements on the same day. This was not the result of consultation between us, but we both urged the same thing. In the Conservative party statement on December 5 we maintained that certain members of the Privy Council office affected the CYC concept in its very beginning, and this was one of the reasons the whole thing went

on the rocks. I do not want to quote too much from Mr. Edmonds' statement, but once more I refer to the minister's statement that the company's formative period was over. I suggest it is time for the minister to have a realistic look at the CYC in its present state, and as minister of the Crown responsible for public funds he should call a spade a spade and phase out the company so that its objectives can be achieved by another viable agency.

Also in our statement of December 5, we said that in addition to the failure of the previous administration to follow the direction of Parliament there was the difficulty that the Company of Young Canadians was run by a provisional council from its inception on July 11, 1966, to October 4, 1969. This three-year period of stewardship was the incubator for the present problems of the company. The government cannot escape its responsibility for failure to provide sufficient support to the company at that time. We also said:

A quick perusal of the shortcomings, as set out in the report, reveals as sad an indictment of mismanagement and lack of control in a federal agency, rarely seen, if ever admitted.

While the minister says it is not a federal agency he cannot avoid this description through semantics. The Company of Young Canadians was formed by Parliament. The minister makes appointments to its council. Therefore, it is some type of agency under the auspices or aegis of the government.

I do not want to go over all of the points that we made in our statement in December. Perhaps we shall make them later when we debate the bill, if ever we debate it. But the report by the House of Commons committee is a sad commentary on the lack of direction and leadership given to this challenging agency. We believe therefore, and for a variety of reasons, many mentioned in the report, that the company is no longer a credible creature for social action at the community level and, since fundamental legislative changes are necessary, that the company should be phased out and the federal government employ an independent body to review the experience of the past three years. It should consult with those involved and with other agencies regarding the original concept of social action and youth in government to give voice to concepts to be carried out by that organization without the liabilities of the old. If there is any question about the liabilities, surely that doubt was removed by the activities of the weekend. Even yet, we do not