

how to carry out the studies required to ease the task of public servants; it is remarkable that the quality of the public service keeps improving, as does that of all hon. members incidentally.

Speaking of publications, as the sponsor of this bill stated, we must also bear in mind the cost of such publications and try to avoid duplication. The Committee on Public Accounts, a member of which I was for many years, has seriously considered the tabling of public accounts and, particularly, the granting of contracts of employment undertaken by the departments.

So, we studied this problem for many years because we thought that the public accounts were too bulky and that a person who was not too familiar with a government institution would have some difficulty understanding them, especially as some relatively small expenses did not appear in public accounts. This is why there were changes made in the format of public accounts.

So, if my hon. friend who presented this bill very objectively wants to get further information concerning hiring contracts entered into by the various departments, I shall be very happy to refer him to public accounts, volumes I-III, 1970-71. In volume II, sections 28, 29, 30 and 31, he will find exactly what he wants. I refer here to section 28 of 1970-71 public accounts entitled "Professional and Special Services (with individual payments of \$2,000 or over)—and this is probably what my hon. friend had in mind, besides the employees of the Prime Minister's office which he also mentioned—where I find the information requested by the hon. member.

If a list of expenses of \$2,000 or more only is published now, it is to comply with a recommendation made a few years ago by a standing committee of this House. The list of departments is given here: Agriculture, Communications, Post Office, etc. Here is what one can find about the Department of Agriculture:

Analyst fees
Artificial insemination services
Boarding house operations

Cattle backtagging—

Under the Canadian Livestock Feed Board, we can read:

Pre-audit services
Stenographic and typing services

Economic consultant services

Under the Communications Department, we find:

Clerical and secretarial services

Names are given as well as amounts of expenses of \$2,000 or more.

With that, Mr. Speaker, one can hardly complain. Maybe the government should, apart from that, publish every month in the *Canada Gazette*, a list that would be endless, I believe, and very costly. The more so since apart from the public accounts, where the figures called for in this bill are available.

We also have the orders in council which are tabled regularly and made available at all times to hon. members and which give certain details. Certain credits must be approved by the Treasury Board when they are above a

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given amount. So there again, expenses are controlled. Moreover, the Auditor General still controls expenses and tells us whenever he believes some expenses are unjustifiable.

With the explanations I just gave, I am sure my hon. friend from Winnipeg North will not mind the fact that I do not agree with him. Besides, it behoves the opposition in the House to discuss and exchange views on certain points. After all, I believe the list of publications I mentioned a while ago is sufficient to respond to the object of the bill before us.

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take too much of the House's time as I hope this bill will be adopted before 6 o'clock tonight.

I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow) who has introduced it and assure him of my support in respect of this bill.

I thought that this measure was quite reasonable since the principle was to determine where the taxpayers' money goes and how it is spent, the duty of a member being to control the public administration. In fact, I thought this bill would be unanimously endorsed by all members.

However, after hearing the speech of the hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Leblanc), I believe I should review this case in order to place the debate in its true perspective.

What is Bill C-19 aiming at? Is it concerned with artificial insemination or any of the subjects mentioned by the hon. member for Laurier? Not at all. The sole purpose of this bill is to provide information to the public about the contracts of employment entered into by the Prime Minister's office or other departments. That is all. No additional information is needed since it already appears, as he has mentioned, in the Public Accounts. This information can also be found in other documents published by Crown corporations. But the details we know nothing about are those concerning the administration of the various departments and particularly of the office of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau).

• (1750)

These are things we do not know anything about and neither does the hon. member for Laurier.

According to some people in this Parliament, more than 80 persons work for the Prime Minister's office. Other reliable persons whom you and I know well, Mr. Speaker, claim that more than 120 persons work for the Prime Minister in his office here in Ottawa. Other equally reliable sources state that the Prime Minister's office includes still much more persons, over 225 if we take into account the offices scattered in the main cities of the country. And what are these people doing? Someone spoke previously of participatory democracy, which is absolutely ridiculous because the offices do not consult people before a bill is passed. Their sole purpose, according to what we understand—and here again the hon. member for Laurier should prove the contrary if he knows so much—is to tell the Prime Minister what public opinion is after bills have been passed, and that is not political participation.