

*Financial Administration Act*

What is so wrong about that? It is clear, meaningful and desirable, but the government decided it did not want it. It wants the comptroller general to be under its control. That is what will happen when this bill is passed.

We gave them another idea in this amendment in these words:

(e) satisfactory procedures measure the effectiveness of government programs;

Is that offensive, Mr. Speaker? Of course not, but the government wants to throttle the comptroller general and, if this bill is passed, that is what will happen because he will have to take orders from the Treasury Board. He will not be responsible to parliament. Mr. Speaker, I am getting sick and tired of agencies, Crown corporations, and even this government not being responsible to parliament, and the Canadian people are getting sick and tired of it.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** They are going to get rid of them.

**Mr. Alexander:** I accept what the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton just said—the Canadian people will get rid of this government.

We even went further in the amendment and indicated that if we had somehow or other stepped on the toes of Treasury Board, the secretariat or this government, they could put in the "Catch 22" phrase in the following terms:

and without restricting the generality of the foregoing shall perform such additional duties and functions as may be assigned to him by the Treasury Board.

What is wrong with that, Mr. Speaker? The government does not want it—it wants to flimflam the Canadian people, to govern in secrecy.

I was concerned about this, so I thought the best thing would be to ask the Auditor General what he thought of the amendment. The poor man has been listening to Treasury Board and the law officers of the Crown who wanted to talk about precedents—they claimed that this thing had never happened before and therefore they could not spell out the duties of a deputy minister. I say that is a lot of nonsense. This parliament can do anything it wants as long as we have an alert, an awake and responsible government.

● (1602)

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** And the Auditor General is good, let me say that. All hon. members would commend him highly for the very significant role he has accepted and for the way in which he is discharging his duties. Thank goodness we have him. He is not afraid of these guys. The government whip has said he is an old friend of his. The whip in due time will have to determine whether he has any friends in Hamilton Mountain.

**An hon. Member:** Do you?

[Mr. Alexander.]

**Mr. Alexander:** I do not represent Hamilton Mountain. The hon. member who is the Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs, I think—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. The hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. MacFarlane) is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. MacFarlane:** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to mention to the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) when he referred to Hamilton Mountain that it seems to me in committee that Mr. Macdonell said:

I know that Mr. MacFarlane has a tremendous reputation in the sports field.

**An hon. Member:** Is that a point of order?

**Mr. Alexander:** Mr. Speaker, do you know what the hon. member has just done? He has misled the House. I want him to tell me that he is reading that from some report or some committee hearings whereby the Auditor General makes a specific reference. I do not want to pursue it. But if he does not have it I want him to stand up and say that he is just joking and just trying to bring some levity to this debate. We do not need any levity because it is a very serious matter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. The hon. member for Hamilton Mountain is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. MacFarlane:** Mr. Speaker, this item is from the Committee Report on Miscellaneous Estimates. It appears at page 2:46. It is a very serious point and I was not joking at all. He said:

I know that Mr. MacFarlane has a tremendous reputation in the sports field, and he has used the analogy of two referees, referees of authority, and so on. This gives me an opportunity to clarify what it is I am trying to say because it is quite clear that there has been a misunderstanding . . .

Mr. Macdonell was clearing up a point where he had used the words umpire and referee, and the analogy which I had used in sports aided him in clarifying that he had not meant this at all, which is what this bill is all about.

**Mr. Alexander:** I wish the government whip would go back to sleep because he is being offensive at this particular time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. I would suggest that all members of this House have tremendous reputations and I suggest to the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) to get on with Bill C-10 and go back to work.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Alexander:** Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I was trying to do until some of the smart-alecks on the other side intervened without any reason. This is not acceptable, and it is no cheap political trick. There is another dummy-dummy in the backbench; they are trying to get in. I did not mention anyone's name, so he is safe.

I will return to what I was trying to put before this House in terms of the edification not only of the other ministers but of