

[Translation]

My colleague will admit that in such a complex environment it is difficult to design and set up a new fully automated financial system, yet the CBC did undertake to do just that. There was the odd mistake here and there, we all know that, but I would suggest that such technical difficulties as may have led some people to believe that \$57 million were unaccounted for, have been adequately explained in subsequent weeks.

Madam Speaker, I think it is important to keep in mind that—

[English]

—it is true that by year-end some \$57 million worth of transactions had been placed into the suspense account. While this is cause for concern, no loss of funds was involved. That is the most important point. Indeed, the Auditor General himself has said that he found no evidence of misappropriation of resources. The management of the CBC has informed the Minister of Communications (Miss MacDonald) that these entries have since been reallocated into their proper expense accounts.

[Translation]

In concluding, Madam Speaker, I think we must be thankful to our colleague and commend Hon. Members for seeing to it that CBC funds are wisely expended. Canadians have to be assured that indeed there were no losses in these circumstances, that it was an administration matter.

[English]

CROWN CORPORATIONS—CORPORATION'S UNDISCLOSED LIABILITIES. (B) AMOUNT OF LIABILITIES

Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre): Madam Speaker, I listened with a sense of rapt interest to the Hon. Member for Etobicoke North (Mr. Pennock) doing a bit of CBC-bashing in regard to some \$57 million, which is a great deal of money. The Parliamentary Secretary has just assured us that this money has not been lost or misappropriated. I have a good one to tell the Hon. Member for Etobicoke North.

I rise this evening because a few weeks ago *The Fifth Estate* revealed that after selling de Havilland Aircraft of Canada to Boeing, the Government is now responsible for paying tens of millions of dollars in claims against de Havilland. This was not revealed to the Canadian people when the company was sold. In this case the Canadian people were persuaded that a very big deal was being negotiated. The figure of \$165 million was put forward, although we know that the full amount will never be paid. We have learned subsequently of tens of millions of dollars the Boeing company is not paying but the taxpayers will have to pay to creditors and claimants of de Havilland.

● (1810)

When I complained to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Côté) about this, he said that no information concerning this issue was withheld in any manner and that it was fully provided by the Minister in January of 1986 when he appeared before the committee of the House which was

looking into the transaction. That statement was absolutely wrong. That information was not given to us in the House or in committee.

When I asked for the production of documents, the documents were not produced. When I put in a request for access to information from the Government, the information was not made available and I was not given a refund. When I wrote letters to the Minister asking for it, I did not receive the information. My colleague and I, the Hon. Member for Laurier (Mr. Berger), even took the Government to court to try to get an order requiring the Government to give us this and other information but we were unsuccessful. The information is still the confidential property of the Government.

I do not think this is right. I think a Government that is committed to open Government and claims to be concerned about the waste of \$57 million by the CBC ought to be concerned about this and ought to be more forthcoming. No one agrees more than I that de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd. has benefited from its association with a company that is successful, believes in the discipline of the market-place and knows how to make money. However, Boeing has been successful with de Havilland because of the investment of the taxpayers of Canada. Canadians have invested talent in the creation, innovation and design of propeller aircraft for this modern age. We are entitled to get something out of de Havilland for our contribution.

As you well know, Madam Speaker, we are not getting \$165 million. The millions we are receiving are offset by liabilities like these. As I said, I am glad that de Havilland is successful and I know that Boeing is making a contribution to its success and that jobs are being created. However, we are not receiving a return on our investment because the Government gave the company away on more favourable terms than it had indicated. As demonstrated so effectively by *The Fifth Estate* just a few weeks ago, the hidden, continuing liabilities and obligations of taxpayers more than cancelled out the multimillion dollar purchase price.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Blais (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, where I come from, they would say it takes bloody nerve to rise in the House and criticize our Government for the decisions that were made in the course of the sale of de Havilland.

I think the Hon. Member's memory fails him, because on October 15, the Minister referred in his reply to losses of over one billion dollars incurred by this company, which meant that the Government was forced to intervene several times every year. Their Government made a habit of considering the public treasury as an inexhaustible source of funds. The deficit, 200 billion or 300 billion, it all didn't matter. There was never any consideration of the fact that Canadian companies could be helped and supported by the Government in other ways than by just injecting new funds every time there was a shortfall.