

Closing Expo 1967 Corporation

detail in connection with this matter. Subsequently, in Paris, the late Senator Marc Drouin, while attending an exposition in 1958, suggested in a speech that the time had come to inaugurate that great undertaking in Canada. Throughout there was the complete, enthusiastic, energetic and imaginative support of His Worship Mayor Drapeau. Immediately, recommendations came from various individuals. On September 5, 1958, a letter was received from Raymond Dupuis, President, Chamber de Commerce du District de Montreal, asking for support on behalf of an exposition to be held in 1967 in the city of Montreal.

• (3:40 p.m.)

On two occasions, the government which I had the honour to lead endeavoured to bring this about. The first occasion was at the meeting of the international Exposition board. The Soviet Union stepped in and asked for the exposition to be held in Moscow in commemoration of their fiftieth anniversary. Canada lost out by one vote. Later, the Soviet Union decided that it did not intend to go ahead, and we sent a representative to Paris in the person of Colonel Sevigny to bring about support for this exposition being given to Canada. The decision of the board was unanimous and the question of financing arose. There can be no doubt as to where the Government of Canada stood, despite the statements made by the minister in the committee and outside of this House. The question was, for how much should the federal government be liable? This question was discussed at length in co-operation not only with the municipal government of Montreal but with the government of Quebec. The then premier of that province, Mr. Lesage, gave the fullest co-operative support to the bringing about of an exposition toward which the three governments, federal, provincial and the municipal government of Montreal, would make their contributions. I emphasize the degree to which there was full co-operation among the three levels of government.

The determination as to the amount for which the federal government should be responsible was clear and definite. Section 11 of the Canadian World Exhibition Corporation Act reads as follows:

The Minister of Finance, at the request of the Corporation, may, out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, pay to the Corporation by way of grant such amounts as are required for the conduct of the business of the Corporation but the aggregate of all amounts paid to the Corporation under this section shall not exceed twenty million dollars.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Now, by some method of false reasoning the minister has endeavoured to raise the smokescreen that sometime, someplace, I stated that we should not restrict ourselves to that amount if a few million dollars more voted by Parliament would make the exposition a success.

The sum of \$40 million was the total amount of the contribution from all three levels of government. The city of Toronto was interested in having this exposition. It had had virtually 100 years of experience in operating the finest annual exposition anywhere in the world. Naturally, Toronto had facilities for a world exposition, although the area covered by the Toronto exposition would not have been sufficient to meet the needs of a world exposition.

The then mayor of Toronto, Nathan Phillips, Q.C., took strong exception, in a communication to me on August 25, 1958, to a statement made by the late Senator Drouin. Senator Drouin made a public statement that the centenary should be celebrated by a fair in Montreal. However, when Toronto found out that the federal contribution determined would be \$20 million, the answer was that it was not interested in having the exhibition because it could not be put on for a total contribution of \$40 million. We, in the government, then determined that the exhibition should go to the city of Montreal.

It was a tremendous success and everything about it made Canadians proud of their heritage. We are dealing now with a financial situation, and the failure of the government of Canada to exercise any control over the greatest orgy of expenditure that has ever taken place in this country. Apparently anything went and there was no care, no attention and no regard by the Department of Finance or by the Pearson government in respect of controlling expenditures. Much the same thing has happened in the last year in connection with this organization of the young Canadians, where everybody is a friend and nobody is controlled. The government sits and looks on while the Canadian taxpayer's money is poured down the drain. That is what happened at Expo for that period from the time of the organization right through to the end. We cannot do anything about it now, they say, That is true; the Canadian taxpayer has paid \$122 million more than there was any undertaking to pay because the government simply did not exercise any control.

One of the most interesting features in visiting Expo was the degree to which nobody