

against the motion, I am going to look to the same party as the mover and possibly he will speak to the motion.

**Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened with some interest to the member opposite representing the government and the member representing the Bloc who just finished speaking to the bill.

The intent of the private member's bill is to bring more financial accountability to crown corporations. These are not public corporations; they are crown corporations. It is kind of a hybrid. It is not as though they are using their own money; they are using our money.

How is it that a member of Parliament representing the people of the country, especially the member for Kingston and the Islands, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, could possibly say that he cannot support the bill as it is written? What would it take for the government to support the bill?

Perhaps the answer is not to support the bill. Perhaps it would be to privatize it. Mr. Speaker, if this were your money or my money, or the money involved was not public money but personal money out of the pockets of Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer, would we be looking at our responsibilities as members of Parliament a bit differently?

A crown corporation has the benefit of being supported by public funds. Yet it does not have the downside of having to worry about whether it is going to get funds to manage its daily affairs from the product of its work. When things go wrong in these crown corporations, when they are not efficiently managed, when they do not have a business plan, do they go to their shareholders who are individuals that put up the money? No. They come running to the Government of Canada with their hands out and say: "Top it up".

The problem is that our country is going into the hole at the rate of \$110 million a day. What do we have to do to get it to sink into the heads of members opposite that they should start by doing the little things right and eventually, if they do enough of the little things right, the big things will turn out right? A little thing is to support the bill which calls for more accountability in a mere five crown corporations.

• (1810)

In order to get some unanimity in the House, the mover of the bill deliberately left out some of the more contentious crown corporations such as the CBC. If we in the House were to reduce the budget of the CBC by about 50 per cent tomorrow, which would mean that we could spend lots of money on cancer research, lots of money on AIDS research or not borrow money to put more of our children to work, I guarantee it would focus

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the attention of the CBC on what it really should be doing, what we can afford and what we cannot afford. However the mover of the motion did not include that because it is a very contentious issue.

What do we have here? We have the Canada Council, the Canadian Film Development Corporation, the International Development Research Centre, the Canadian Wheat Board and the National Arts Centre.

What, the National Arts Centre? How did the National Arts Centre creep into this? How on earth did that become a crown corporation? Could it be that it is located in Ottawa and it is one more thing for the people of Canada to subsidize?

It would be an interesting exercise to go to the rest of the arts centres in the country to find out whether they are crown corporations and whether they have their arms in the pockets of Canadians from coast to coast. Somehow I doubt it.

What is it about being in Ottawa that gives people the thought that money is something that sort of grows on trees or that if it is public money it is not accountable for?

Anybody who has been in business knows that the discipline of an audit is not a negative thing or a bad thing. The discipline of an audit will make any company work better. That is why these crown corporations should be saying: "Wait a minute. We want to be overseen. We recognize the fact that we are dealing with public money".

Why should they not want to be involved? Is it because they are not efficient? Is it because they can run like little fiefdoms and do whatever they want any way they want to? Is it because the Canadian Wheat Board is not perhaps so much a wheat board but a co-op? Is it because the Canada Council is a collection of people who are self-interested, get public money and dole public money out to whoever they think should have it?

I am not suggesting for a moment that the Canada Council and the people involved in the Canada Council are doing so somehow maliciously. I am sure they are doing everything that they are doing with their hearts in the right place. However it is not their money; it is our money. Why should we not oversee every nickel they spend?

The Canadian Film Development Corporation has been the subject of some debate in the House in past months. There are people who think it is doing a good job and there are people who think it is not doing such a good job. There are people who say we have to support it because it is Canadian culture. I think most of us like to go to a movie every once in a while to see a movie that speaks about us, to see something familiar. There might be some granting to the Canadian Film Corporation that pays off; it might even make some money from time to time.