

Refitting of HMCS "Bonaventure"

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

million has been paid out on a ship that is now up for sale and is likely to wind up her days as a floating crap game.

Mr. Gibson: What page is that?

Mr. Coates: Is it not time that the minister or ministers responsible were keelhaunched or scuttled? Let us take a look at another government spending fiasco. An estimated \$18 million National Arts Centre winds up costing \$46 million. Here we have a \$46 million chunk of culture, with prices out of reach of the working man in Ottawa and performances out of reach, through sheer distance, for millions of Canadians from coast to coast. Let us take a look at the \$16 million spent on the beginnings of the P.E.I. Causeway.

An hon. Member: That was a shocking waste.

Mr. Coates: Anybody who visits Prince Edward Island should look at the area where they built railway tracks to Northumberland Strait. Indeed, we have been told that although we wasted \$17 million on the *Bonaventure*, we can reclaim \$500,000 if we sell the ship as scrap. I wonder how much these rails, which cost us between \$16 million and \$17 million, on the edge of the Northumberland Strait would fetch if they were torn up. I walked down that railway line. I thought I might as well. As a taxpayer I thought I might as well walk along those tracks to see how \$16 million of my money had been spent. Well, I did not get my share of enjoyment out of that \$16 million. Unfortunately, the people of British Columbia do not even have a chance to see the rails.

Mr. Dinsdale: Neither do the people of the Prairies.

Mr. Coates: That is all you can see; there are two rails leading to Northumberland Strait. The government did not sink New Brunswick and it has not succeeded in sinking Prince Edward Island.

An hon. Member: Perhaps the present Premier will sink it.

Mr. Coates: Yes, perhaps the present Premier will sink it. He is driving the province very hard. But he has had a tremendous amount of assistance from our friends across the way.

Mr. Dinsdale: Birds of a feather.

Mr. Coates: Who are all hooting together.

Mr. Coates: Those are only a couple of reported items. I wonder how many cents an hour they would represent to a postal worker who feels he is being short-changed by this government. Next year's report by the Auditor General will probably have a special chapter on the Montreal mail trucking farce in which the Post Office set out to save money but has had to pay out more than \$2 million in buying trucks, settling broken contracts, paying for extra security and so on.

So I ask again: Is the government going to peg its expenditure wastes at 6 per cent, or might it be that the minister responsible for the *Bonaventure* in the area of defence production or for government spending in general will, after we have looked at the grim, total picture, be given their marching orders? It would be mighty good news for Canada if that were done, but I doubt if it will be.

I should like to refer to a CBC program entitled "Encounter" on which the President of the Treasury Board appeared on April 11. He was interviewed by Ron Collister, Charles Lynch and Pierre O'Neil. What I like about this program is that the minister talked of a tight ship. The way the expenditures on the *Bonaventure* went, I think the only fellow who was tight was the President of the Treasury Board.

• (9:40 p.m.)

Mr. Dinsdale: He was spending money like a drunken sailor.

Mr. Coates: There could be no doubt about that. When talking about this tight ship, the minister said:

The government is turning rather more attention to what I would call effectiveness as distinct from efficiency—

I do not argue with that.

—that is making sure that what we are doing is producing the result that is really needed—

I do not argue with that. Apparently the main result the government wants is unemployment. They are doing it with an effectiveness that beyond a doubt is better than has been done by any government in Canadian history.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Coates: At the present time 550,000 Canadians are unemployed. If unemployment is the main goal of the government, they are both effective and efficient. This seems to be