

ied. This does a great service to members of Parliament. Critics in certain areas for which they are responsible can obtain concrete direction as to the problems identified in the study. They can look at the action plan which has been set out and determine whether or not the procedure is having the desired effect, so members can do a good analysis of departments which have partaken in the impact study.

The second thing on which I should like to commend the government concerns the office of the Auditor General. I should like to rephrase that. I do not want to commend the government but to commend the Auditor General and his office in the area of the comprehensive audit which has taken place over the last two fiscal years where they carry out an analysis of a certain number of departments. They certainly do not have the manpower to do all the departments of government in one year but I believe they have examined six departments each year for the past two years, for a total of 12 departments. This comprehensive audit provides members of Parliament with information on the basis of which they can look at these departments to see whether they are efficient, accountable to the public, and serving the wishes of the Canadian people.

I will conclude by asking the government to cease blaming the public employees as they have so often done—the public employees who are bashed by members of the Tory party for much of the incompetence which occurs within government. It is quite easy to bash public employees, but really the blame does not rest with public employees in many of the areas where the government has fallen down in accountability and the effectiveness of delivery of programs. The real problem arises from incompetent politicians and poor management. I think this has been reconfirmed by the Auditor General in his last report.

The 1978-79 Report of the Auditor General was quite hard-hitting, asserting that management had lost control of government spending. These other things I mentioned, such as accountability, tie into that issue of poor management although the press did not report it as such—the press seemed to pick up the fact that it was the public employees who were inefficient, and for a while the Conservatives jumped on the band wagon trying to protect the public employees they bash on other occasions when it is more convenient to do so. Mr. Macdonell definitely points out there, and he has admitted in the public accounts committee, that it is not the public employees who are to blame, it is the government and poor management which guides them.

Before concluding, Mr. Speaker, I should like to express my concern that the Conservatives allow this bill to go on to Committee of the Whole this evening so that we can proceed with these long needed changes to the Public Accounts of Canada. I hope the next speaker from the Conservative party will not be carried away with the exuberance of his own verbosity and that we can get on with passing this needed legislation.

**Mr. John Gamble (York North):** Mr. Speaker, I promise the hon. member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake (Mr.

*Adjustment of Accounts Act*

Anguish) that I shall not be carried away by my own verbosity.

I do not know that it is significant to determine who should take credit for what is presented in this House as long as the end product is in the best interests of the public. Accordingly, the hon. member will not find me discussing who should take credit for bringing the bill forward. I hope this same attitude might prevail among members to my extreme left so that in the future, when bills are presented in the House, some regard might be paid to the merits rather than to verbose political rhetoric.

I do not intend to review the detailed analysis which has been so ably made of the consequences of this proposed legislation by my hon. friend from Vancouver Quadra. I will merely point out that as a consequence of the passage of this legislation, through the deletion of assets which were fictitious in nature, the net debt of the Government of Canada will increase, and increase substantially. As a matter of fact, it will increase by the amount of \$4.478 billion.

It is my intention to deal with just one of the single items contained in the bill, that is, the item covered in clause 7 which relates to the aggregate amount of principal and interest outstanding as of March 31, 1981, in respect of loans made to the CBC. These loans were made to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation by Her Majesty pursuant to authority set out in schedule V. They are written off and deleted from the accounts of Canada and, in the words of the clause, any obligation of the Corporation to repay the principal and pay the interest is terminated. Clause 5 contains a rather lengthy list of loans made to the corporation, commencing with the first advance in June of 1964 and ending with the advance of March 19, 1974.

● (2110)

I was initially somewhat concerned about the prospect of writing off loans for a period which had not as yet expired. I think we are only saved by the filing of the schedules which, without an examination of the specific orders in council giving rise to those loans, I would presume were not open-ended, so that many hundreds of millions of dollars might yet be advanced and written off before the money actually reaches the treasury of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. But it is interesting from an examination of the Public Accounts of Canada, 1979, at page 2.13, to examine the exact amount of the CBC write-off. It is in the amount of \$198 million, which is not an insignificant amount by any means.

In determining whether write-offs of loans and obligations of Crown corporations and others as assets of the Government of Canada should be eliminated as assets, this House should ask itself whether it is appropriate to do so. I am not going to deal with the other specific issues and amounts which are covered in Bill C-22 but, rather, with this one only.

I think it is appropriate, accordingly, to ask the question: is it being written off—and I refer to the amount of \$198 million—because the CBC is unable to pay the loan? The answer to that, unfortunately, I do not know, and I hope with a