

*Restraint of Government Expenditures*

gant that they no longer know the difference between right and wrong.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** It is very interesting to note the sensitivity of members across the way when we deal with a matter such as this, described to me this morning as wallowing in the public trough up to his knees and his elbows. I think that is most descriptive.

The hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) refers to the letter by the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert). I do not pretend to have any insight into the inner sanctum of this government. I suspect that some members of the Liberal party do not have any particular insight into the workings of that party, either. I was very much interested to note today that the hon. member for Vaudreuil felt compelled to raise an improper question of privilege regarding a letter he had written. I presume it was an open letter in that I and other members on our side received copies of it. I will refer to it as his "open letter to Canadians." It gives us some insight into the workings of this shamble of a government composed of those who do not take part in the debates of the House and refuse to stand up and be criticized. Once in a while there is a truthful person in that party in terms of what is really happening, and it was refreshing to receive this letter in which the hon. member said:

I have not failed to perceive that much of the provincial disenchantment is rubbing off on the federal Liberal party. This is why there is an urgent need to discuss and to act.

The hon. member for Vaudreuil is quite right that there is a disenchantment with the federal Liberal party, and I do not have to call as my witness any member of the opposition. I can call as my witness any of the gentlemen on the other side of this House who react as though they had stuck their finger in a light socket every time someone mentions these air trips out west or other recent disasters of that party.

We now have a recommendation for the establishment of a royal commission to inquire into the methods of accounting by the government of Canada, a matter that has been dealt with at length by the greatest accounting firms we have in this country, many of them with both a national and an international reputation. We have an Auditor General who is acknowledged to have done a fine job. We have no commission of inquiry, where it is really needed, to investigate how things have been handled by the other side.

● (1650)

In addition to the disaster at Stat-Can, what other disasters have we had? We have had the disaster in the dredging affair, the disaster in respect of tenders for airport car rentals, which is an absolute mish-mash of foolishness, and we have had the Mirabel airport and Sky Shops disaster. In the face of what our late and lamented friend, the former minister of transport, Mr. Marchand, admitted was a mess, what do we have? We have another royal commission of inquiry. It would be great fun being in parliament if it were not so tragic to see the

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton).]

shambling in and out every day and after the question period with only a few of the faithful left on the other side to take the brickbats.

**Mr. Pelletier:** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** I will not permit a question, Mr. Speaker. I think the return of the former member for Langelier, the former minister of transport, would be a very refreshing thing for this country. At least in terms of transportation in this country he would be candid, honest, and would call it what it is, a mess, as he did on many occasions.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think we would find that minister of transport misusing the facilities he was granted as a minister of the Crown. The former minister of transport, as he said on many occasions, came up the hard way. He did not come in through the upper echelons of government. He never felt, of his office, as if he were a member of the board of directors so entrenched that he could not be moved and therefore did not have to be accountable to anybody. There was some human warmth and responsiveness in the former minister of transport. The excuses that have been given in this House underscore what I have to say. Not only has the government and some of its ministers been wrong, but in defending the indefensible they do not know the difference between right and wrong.

I hear a little chirping on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker. It is very interesting that members on the other side of the House make their speeches sitting down. I did not know that was within the rules of the House. There is ample opportunity for all members of the House of Commons to become involved in this debate.

There have been some speakers from the other side of the House. I should like some other members on the government side to rise in this debate, because it is an important one. Aside from the issues in this bill which I have mentioned, which are important, the issue in respect of what the government intends to do with the Railway Act is an important issue. The issue with regard to research in terms of job creation is an important issue. The issue with regard to family allowances and the effect this has on some Canadians is an important issue.

But there is one other issue which rises up out of this bill. It is a question in respect of which the President of the Treasury Board has responsibility. It was raised by the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. O'Connell) when he spoke. I thought he made an excellent speech in terms of this bill. I refer to the problem that has occurred with respect of the public sector which supplies so many of the services upon which Canadians depend. If I remember his speech correctly, the hon. member said something has happened to the relations between the government and its employees, something that was never intended when this parliament quite properly gave its approval for the use of the collective bargaining procedure in the public service of Canada when it allowed the adversary system to be moved from the private sector to the public sector.

This was a great breakthrough in terms of the public service. There are some people who would say this ought to be taken