

*Restraint of Government Expenditures*

**Mr. Goodale:** Also, he is the master of the filibuster.

**Mr. Nowlan:** The title of Bill C-19 has something to do with restraint of government expenditures. I thought we were concerned about restraining government expenditures, but I could not believe my ears when earlier this week I heard what the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Andras) had to say about the recent Auditor General's report. The President of the Treasury Board is an honourable man, and I would still buy a car from him in Thunder Bay—I think.

**Mr. McGrath:** But not a used car.

**Mr. Nowlan:** But not a used car. He is an honourable man, and when he stood up in this House to explain the Auditor General's report he tried to sound natural when he said the budget is under control, but the actual spending of money and our accounting procedures are somewhat out of control. You can readily see our dilemma in discussing a bill such as Bill C-19 which ostensibly has to do with restraint of government expenditures. When the President of the Treasury Board says on the one hand that the actual spending of money, not the budgeting, is out of control, and the Auditor General in his report says that the government has all but lost control of government spending, you can see our dilemma.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** And the government is not going to do anything about it for three years.

**Mr. Nowlan:** What did the government do? It set up a royal commission which is to last three years and cost \$1,000 a day, according to Mr. Pitfield, a person important to some hon. members opposite. Actually, he is somewhat closer to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) than he is to others on the government side. Mr. Pitfield suggested that it will be a 1,000-day royal commission. The government appointed a royal commission to study again that which the Auditor General, helped by 60 or 70 professionals, studied for at least one year.

I am somewhat disappointed at the government's action. I am one of the class of '65, which includes the Prime Minister. I recall the hon. gentleman opposite graduating from the class and becoming Prime Minister, but I remain in the opposition. I hope to improve that state some day soon. Part of the dilemma facing Canadians is that the man who was going to bring in the new politics also plays the oldest shell game, the oldest political game. He knows that when you face an embarrassing development such as the tabling of an Auditor General's report which sheds an unfavourable light on government spending, the thing to do is to upstage the opposition. You pull the oldest card from the pack, or play the oldest shell game, by appointing a royal commission.

● (1720)

We found out yesterday that the government did not even do any checking. Talk about restraint of government expenditures. The government did not even practice restraint when making appointments to the commission. It did not consider

[Mr. Nowlan.]

the conflicts of interest of people who will study themselves. We are not in the litany of judicial interpretations of people opposite, making telephone calls to judges—

**Some hon. Members:** Order!

**Mr. Nowlan:** I am not going down that road. We have been down that road.

There are many things you can say about a royal commission. However, this is the first time we are having a commission where the commissioners will be investigating themselves. This new level of commissioning in this country should be condemned by every Canadian. With regard to Bill C-19—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Nowlan:** I am glad the hon. member for Fort William (Mr. McRae) is in the Chamber. He stands to lose as much as others from the Lakehead eastward.

There are many things I could say about Bill C-19. Before my time runs out I want to move an amendment. I will move a reasoned amendment to the bill in about two minutes just in case I do not have time to complete my remarks.

My particular objection is to clause 15, a very simple clause. The hon. member for Assiniboia knows this because he made a speech on it, as did other members. In clause 15 there are only eight words to be found. It repeals Section 272 of the Railway Act, which is the section that allows export flour and export grain to move at preferred or subsidized rates. Export grain moves at the 1960 rate, and export flour at the 1966 rate. Obviously this helps our situation in the international market.

Because of what is being done through clause 15 and other clauses of this bill, I will move a reasoned amendment. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker):

That all the words after "That" be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"This House declines to give second reading to Bill C-19, an act to amend or repeal certain statutes to enable restraint of government expenditures, because the said bill rejects the principle of parliamentary sovereignty through its excessive use of the expedient and inefficient use of ministerial discretion, thereby further weakening the opportunities available to this House to control expenditures."

I would like to explain the purport of that reasoned amendment. I am glad the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) is here because he is a lawyer.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Without getting into the substance of the amendment, may I be helpful to my hon. friend and suggest that his seconder be someone who has not already spoken? I believe the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) has spoken.

**Mr. Nowlan:** I appreciate that. I am always open to suggestions and respond to constructive ones. I would like to have my amendment seconded by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggar (Mr. Hnatyshyn).