

So criticism is passed on a vote that applies not only to the current year but to subsequent years. It is again a practice which existed for many years.

The report of the Auditor General for 1972 also mentions the fact that the government failed to do anything about the 38 recommendations and comments made by the Public Accounts Committee. When I spoke on the motion on May 26, 1972, I mentioned the action taken by the government concerning those 38 recommendations and comments. I said, and I quote:

A tabulation of these 38 recommendations indicates that the government has indeed responded to them, although not necessarily by acting in the fashion proposed. A substantial number of the issues have been subject to hearings before the Public Accounts Committee. I may say that in most cases these have satisfied the committee, because the subsequent reports of the committee have not raised the issues again.

I now refer to tabulations of issues and action taken. Many of these have been subject to lengthy debate. In this regard the committee has played an effective role and the procedure is not as ineffective as indicated. Mr. Speaker, the following is a summary of action taken on recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee: First, recommendations on which there has been specific comment by the minister involved, 14; second, recommendations on which there has been subsequent specific testimony by departments to the Public Accounts Committee without any new or changed recommendation by the committee, eight; third, recommendations on which departments have not been called upon to testify to the Public Accounts Committee but on which they have taken action which has not received publicity, three; fourth, recommendations which call for continued observation by the Auditor General of departmental practices rather than government action, one; fifth, recommendations subject to action re formulation of separate Auditor General Act, one.

And on the subject of a separate act for the Auditor General the Public Accounts Committee during the fourth session of the 28th Parliament, of which I was a member, called upon a committee of experts to draft a bill to be submitted to the Public Accounts Committee. I am sure that the Public Accounts Committee will take its responsibilities and make recommendations to the Parliament of Canada or the government.

On this committee were, I think, Mr. Ball, assistant deputy minister of the Department of Supply and Services, the parliamentary counsel for the House of Commons, the parliamentary counsel for the Senate and a representative of the Auditor General's office. And I go on with the quotation:

Sixth,

I go back to the recommendations and comments made by the Public Accounts Committee in recent years, and I quote:

Sixth, action could not be determined in time available since tabling of Auditor General's report, four.

Seventh, recommendations made too recently for action to be taken, seven.

So, that is what happened to the 38 recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to insist once again that I am one of those who believe that the present procedure is an improvement over the one that existed from 1867 to 1968. Such a procedure enables members of the various parties to put questions either to the minister or to the officials.

### *Control of Public Funds*

I again stress the fact that if a member, under the rules, requires a witness from the private sector for additional information to those given by the minister or an official, he can give notice to the chairman of the committee, and this witness must then appear before the committee.

And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the House, the Public Accounts Committee as well as other committees will keep on looking for improved procedures so that, as I said earlier, the public moneys will be closely controlled.

● (1640)

[*English*]

Mr. H. W. Danforth (*Kent-Essex*): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to speaking today on this subject and backing up my colleague who proposed the motion. I do so because I think we are expressing, through this motion, not only the feeling of the official opposition and of the other opposition parties in this House, but the feeling of uneasiness of the people of Canada when they see what is transpiring in their Parliament.

I listened to the speeches today because I am sincerely interested in this matter. I was very impressed by the speakers on this side who brought forward various points demonstrating their concern over Parliament's control of the expenditure of Canadian taxpayers' money which has reached tremendous levels. We appreciate this fact when we talk of the disbursement of \$20 billion. No wonder the Canadian people not only are concerned about, but have a right to know how these moneys are disbursed. Those who are disbursing them should be held responsible for their policies and for the manner in which these moneys are distributed.

I was struck again today—I do not say this unkindly; I say it factually—by the arrogance of the speakers from the government party when they tried to demonstrate once again that Canadians have never had it so good, that they have never had a system that has been working so well. In their speeches they have demonstrated their unveiled contempt for the feelings of the people of this nation. That is the prime reason this government is in political trouble. Everyone makes errors. It is only normal that a group of individuals acting together will make errors; and this government makes errors. That is why we bring this matter to the attention of Parliament today.

It is not good enough for this government to assure Parliament that they are infallible in the way they are conducting the business of our nation, and that the Auditor General should not dare to criticize their expenditures—the man whose responsibility and prime objective is to study those expenditures. They do not think he should dare to question any of their disbursements. This indicates the feeling of the government toward Parliament and the people of Canada.

I was both upset and shocked by the speeches of members of the government side. I refer to one in particular, whom I shall not name, who spent his entire time criticizing the Auditor General, the man who in latter years has done more than any other individual, in the exercise of his duty, to safeguard the expenditures made on behalf of Canadian taxpayers. That was his job, and we must give him credit for trying to do it to the best of his ability. We must not criticize him because he dared to suggest that in